

ORIGINAL EC COMICS FROM THE 1950s!

HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO

THE HAUNT OF



NO. 20
AUG



250
345
CANADA

FEAR[®]

FEATURING...



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! WELL, *BURY ME AT THE BEACH* AND CALL ME A *SAND-WITCH*... IF IT ISN'T TIME TO RUSTLE UP ANOTHER *MORBID MENU* FROM MY *SCREAM-TABLE* HERE IN *THE HAUNT OF FEAR*. YEP, IT'S YOUR *HOSSTESS* IN *HEAVES*, THE OLD WITCH, FEEDING THE FUMING FIRE UNDER MY *GRUDDY CAULDRON*, READY TO LADLE OUT ANOTHER *LURID LUNCHEON* OF *LOATHSOME LEVITIES*. NOW, TIGHTEN YOUR *BELTS* SO YOU WON'T *BUST A BUT* WHEN YOU HEAR THIS *TASTY TALE OF TERROR*, AND I'LL BEGIN THE *FOUL FARE* I CALL...

THUMP FUN!

OUTSIDE THE STATELY OLD MANSION, THE MIST EDDIED AND SWIRLED, WRAPPING ITSELF AROUND THE HOUSE LIKE A FLIMSY GREY SHAWL. OFF IN THE DISTANCE, A DOG HOWLED INTO THE FLUID NIGHT. IN HIS BEDROOM, *LUTHER COURTNEY... ELDEST* OF THE AGED COURTNEY BROTHERS ... SAT BOLT UPRIGHT, SLEEP STILL CLINGING TO HIS BLOODSHOT WRINKLED EYES. A FIGURE STOOD OVER HIM. A FIGURE WITH A KNIFE RAISED OVER ITS HEAD...

WHO... WHO'S *THERE*?
MARVIN? *MARVIN*...*DON'T!*
MY GOD...

GOOD-BYE,
DEAR
BROTHER
LUTHER...



MARVIN COURTNEY, YOUNGEST OF THE THREE COURTNEY BROTHERS, BROUGHT THE KNIFE DOWN WITH A GRUNT OF EXERTION, PLUNGING IT UP TO THE HILT INTO HIS OLDEST BROTHER'S CHEST. A SHRILL SCREAM ERUPTED FROM LUTHER'S HORRIFIED MOUTH... THEN DIED, GURGLING...



AGAIN AND AGAIN THE KNIFE CAME DOWN, TEARING, SLASHING, RIPPING AT THE OLD MAN'S CHEST. MARVIN'S RAVING VOICE ECHOED THROUGH THE BEDROOM...



THE OLD MANSION LAY SILENT. MARVIN'S CRY ECHOED THROUGH THE LONG DARK CORRIDORS, FADING AWAY...



STILL NO ANSWER. MARVIN DROPPED THE BLOODY KNIFE AND SCURRIED DOWN THE HALL TO GILBERT'S BEDROOM. HE FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR...



GILBERT COURTNEY, THE MIDDLE BROTHER, WAS GONE. HIS BED WAS EMPTY. MARVIN STOOD THERE, STARING... THE REALIZATION DAWNING...



MARVIN HURRIED BACK TO THE ELDEST BROTHER'S BEDROOM. HE DARTED TO THE SECRET WALL PANEL WHERE LUTHER'D ALWAYS HIDDEN THE FAMILY FORTUNE. IT SLID OPEN, YAWNING...



MARVIN TURNED TO LUTHER'S BLOODY BODY, ITS CHEST RIPPED AND TORN, LYING STIFFLY ON THE HUGE BED...



MARVIN LIFTED HIS ELDEST BROTHER'S CORPSE AND CARRIED IT FROM THE BEDROOM...

I... I'VE GOT TO GET RID OF LUTHER'S BODY. I'LL... I'LL **BURY** IT... IN THE **CELLAR!**

DEEP DOWN IN THE CELLAR OF THE OLD MANSION, MARVIN OPENED A GAPING HOLE IN THE SOIL FLOOR...

IF... IF ANYONE *ASKS* WHERE **GILBERT AND LUTHER ARE**, I'LL TELL THEM I DON'T *KNOW*! I'LL... I'LL SAY THEY BOTH **DISAPPEARED** ... AND THE **MONEY** DISAPPEARED **TOO!**

HE PUSHED LUTHER'S STIFFENING BODY INTO THE CRUDE GRAVE AND SHOVELED THE DIRT BACK IN UPON IT...

AND IF THEY EVER *FIND* LUTHER'S BODY DOWN HERE, THEY'LL THINK **GILBERT** KILLED HIM AND RAN OFF WITH THE MONEY. IT WILL **SERVE GILBERT RIGHT**. HE SHOULDN'T HAVE *DONE* THIS TO ME!

MARVIN TAMPED DOWN THE SOIL ON LUTHER'S GRAVE AND RETURNED UPSTAIRS. HE WENT INTO THE LIVING-ROOM AND EASED DOWN INTO HIS FAVORITE CHAIR. FOR A LONG WHILE HE SAT THINKING ABOUT THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO HIS HORRENDOUS DEED...

WE ALWAYS *HATED* LUTHER, GILBERT AND I. WE *DESPISED* HIM BECAUSE HE *CONTROLLED* THE *FAMILY FORTUNE*. IT HAD BEEN *LEFT* TO HIM. WE WERE NOTHING BUT *CHARITY CASES*. AND HE *LORDED* IT OVER US...

LUTHER USED TO TAKE OUT THE CHESTS OF BILLS AND GOLD COINS FROM THEIR HIDING PLACE IN HIS BED-ROOM AND COUNT THEM. EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT HE WENT THROUGH THE RITUAL OF COUNTING THEM, AND GILBERT AND I WOULD WATCH HUNGRILY...

\$251,350. HEH, HEH! A *TIDY SUM*, EH, MY LOVING BROTHERS?

YES, LUTHER!

A *TIDY SUM*, LUTHER!

LUTHER WOULD ALWAYS *REMIND* US *WHOSE* MONEY IT *WAS*...

REMEMBER, MY DEAR BROTHERS. THIS IS *MY* MONEY... *ALL* OF IT! ONLY WHEN I'M *DEAD* WILL YOU GET *ANY* OF IT. ONLY WHEN I'M *DEAD*...

YES, DON'T TALK LIKE THAT, LUTHER!

FINALLY, WE COULD *STAND* IT NO LONGER, SO WE *PLOTTED* IT. GILBERT AND I *PLOTTED* LUTHER'S *DEATH*...

IT'S THE *ONLY WAY*, MARVIN! WE HAVE TO *BEG* FOR EACH CENT, HE'S SO *MISERLY*! WE *DESERVE* OUR *RIGHTFUL SHARE*! BUT IF HE WERE *DEAD*, IT WOULD BE *ALL OURS*... THE *WHOLE FORTUNE*!

BUT THAT'S *MURDER*, GILBERT!

'AT FIRST, I'D OBJECTED. BUT THEN, TONIGHT, I'D AGREED...'

ALL RIGHT, GILBERT. I SEE *NOW* THAT YOU'RE *RIGHT*! IT IS THE *ONLY* WAY! ALL RIGHT! WE'LL *KILL* HIM...

NOW YOU'RE TALKING, MARVIN.

'I'D EVEN VOLUNTEERED. I WANTED TO SPARE GILBERT THE EMOTIONAL SHOCK OF COMMITTING THE DASTARDLY DEED. I LOVED HIM. I WAS YOUNGER THAN HE. SO I'D VOLUNTEERED...'

ARE YOU *SURE*, MARVIN?

YES, GILBERT. I'M *SURE*. I WANT TO DO IT!

MARVIN LAUGHED OUT LOUD. HIS LAUGHTER DRIFTED THROUGH THE EMPTY HOUSE...

WHAT A *FOOL* I WAS. GILBERT MADE A *SUCKER* OUT OF ME! *OF COURSE!* HE *PLANNED* IT THIS WAY!



MARVIN STOOD UP, SHRIEKING...

OF *COURSE!* GILBERT'S NEXT IN LINE. HE'S *OLDER* THAN I. WITH LUTHER DEAD, THE MONEY IS RIGHTFULLY *HIS!* HE *WANTED* ME TO VOLUNTEER. HE...HE...



MARVIN QUIETED. HE LISTENED. FROM BELOW, FAINT, ALMOST INAUDIBLE, CAME THE STRANGE RHYTHMIC SOUND...

THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP!

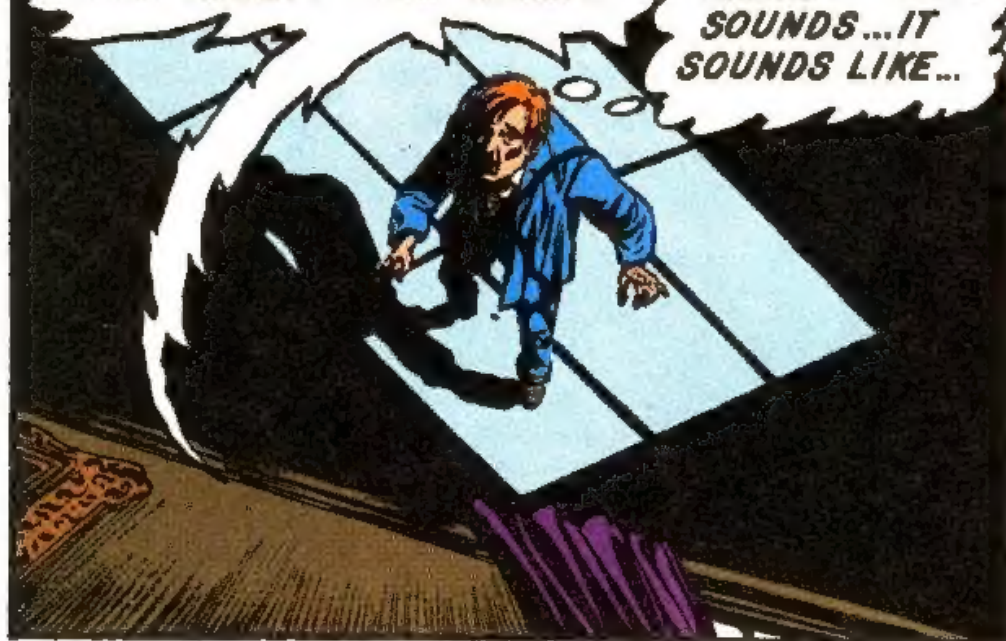
WHAT...WHAT'S THAT?



IT WAS AS IF GHOST FINGERS WERE POUNDING ON A SPECTRE-DRUM. IT THROBBED INCESSANTLY, MOVING UPWARD THROUGH THE HOUSE...

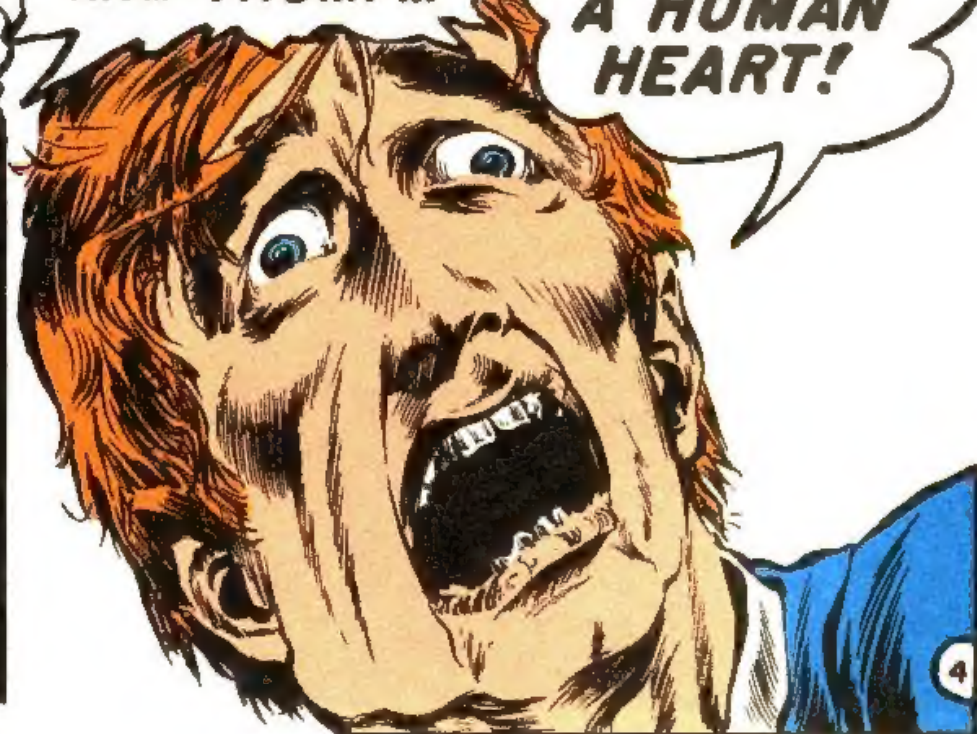
THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP!

IT'S IN THE WALLS! IT... IT SOUNDS... IT SOUNDS LIKE...



THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP...

... LIKE THE BEATING OF A HUMAN HEART!



THE COLOR DRAINED FROM MARVIN'S FACE. HE STARED AT THE LIVING-ROOM WALL. BEHIND IT, THE THROBBING SOUND WENT ON...LOUDLY...CONTINUOUSLY...

THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP!
THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP...

IT'S LUTHER...
COME BACK
TO HAUNT ME!



HE SCAMPERED HYSTERICALLY DOWN THE CELLAR STAIRS ...

THUM-THUMP!
THUM-THUMP...

I'LL STOP HIM!
I'LL FIND HIM
AND STOP HIM!



HE RETURNED, BREATHLESS, WITH THE AXE...

I'LL GET YOU.
YOU'RE IN
THAT WALL,
AND I'LL...

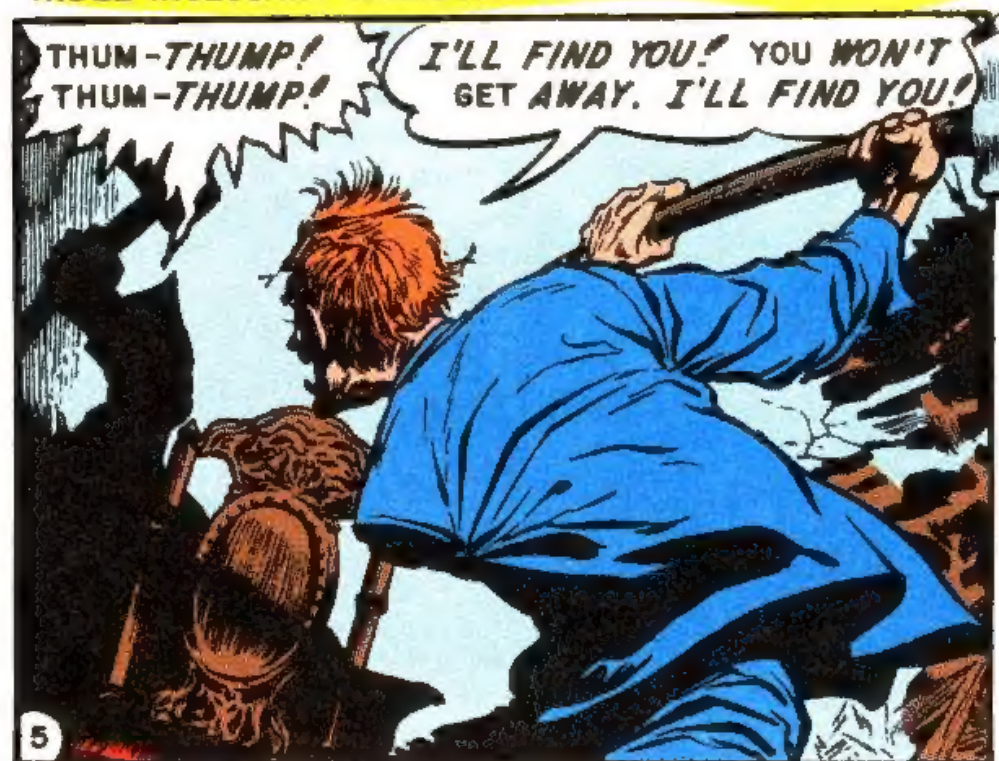
THUM-THUMP!
THUM-THUMP...



IT CAME FROM FURTHER DOWN THE WALL. THAT HORRIBLE INCESSANT THROBBING...

THUM-THUMP!
THUM-THUMP!

I'LL FIND YOU! YOU WON'T
GET AWAY. I'LL FIND YOU!



MARVIN CLAPPED HIS HANDS OVER HIS EARS, BUT HE COULDN'T SHUT OUT THE BEATING SOUND. IT CONTINUED, POUNDING...

THUM-THUMP!
THUM-THUMP!
THUM-THUMP!

I WON'T LISTEN! NO!
I WON'T LISTEN!



HE SWUNG WILDLY, CHOPPING, HACKING, SMASHING A HUGE HOLE IN THE LIVING-ROOM WALL. HE REACHED IN SCREAMING...

WHERE
ARE YOU?

THUM-THUMP!
THUM-THUMP!
THUM-THUMP...



HE SWUNG THE AXE AGAIN, SPLINTERING, CRASHING, TEARING ANOTHER HUGE HOLE. THE BEATING STOPPED. HE REACHED IN...

CURSE YOU!
COME HERE!
COME HERE!

THUM-THUMP...



THE HEARTBEAT BEGAN AGAIN...FURTHER DOWN THE WALL...

IT BEAT OMINOUSLY, CONTINUOUSLY. HE SCREAMED AFTER IT, SWEARING OATHS, SHRIEKING INVECTIVES, TEARING, SMASHING, CHOPPING HUGE HOLES IN THE LIVING-ROOM WALL, MOVING AFTER IT THROUGH THE HOUSE, THE DINING-ROOM, THE LIBRARY...

I'LL GET YOU! I'LL GET YOU YET. I'LL...

THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP...



HE STOPPED, AXE RAISED! THE PULSATING SOUND CAME FROM BEHIND THE BOOK-CASE. A BOOK TITLE CAUGHT HIS EYE...

THE... THE TELL-TALE HEART, AND OTHER STORIES, BY... EDGAR ALLEN POE!

THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP! THUM...



THE THROBBING SOUND STOPPED... SUDDENLY...

HE GASPED, DROPPING THE AXE. HE PULLED THE BOOK FROM THE SHELF, GIGGLING...

THE TELL-TALE HEART. OF COURSE! I REMEMBER!



HE SAT DOWN IN THE HUGE LEATHER LIBRARY CHAIR, SOBBING, THE TEARS STREAMING DOWN HIS CHEEKS...

OF COURSE! THE TALE BY POE... ABOUT THE MURDERER WHO BURIED HIS VICTIM BENEATH THE FLOOR BOARDS. I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN...



HE READ... ALOUD... HALF LAUGHING... HALF CRYING...

'FIRST OF ALL I DISMEMBERED THE CORPSE. I CUT OFF THE HEAD AND THE ARMS AND THE LEGS. THEN I TOOK UP THREE PLANKS FROM THE FLOORINGS AND DEPOSITED ALL. NO HUMAN EYE COULD HAVE DETECTED ANYTHING WRONG...'



'THERE WAS NOTHING TO WASH OUT... NO STAIN OF ANY KIND... NO BLOOD SPOT WHATEVER. I HAD BEEN TOO WARY FOR THAT. A TUB HAD CAUGHT ALL... HA, HA!'



'IT WAS FOUR O'CLOCK. AS THE BELL SOUNDED THE HOUR, THERE CAME A KNOCKING AT THE STREET DOOR. I OPENED IT WITH A LIGHT HEART... FOR WHAT HAD I NOW TO FEAR?...

A NEIGHBOR OF YOURS HEARD A SHRIEK!

WE SUSPECT FOUL PLAY!

WE'VE BEEN DEPUTED TO SEARCH THE PREMISES!



I BADE THE THREE DETECTIVES WELCOME...

'I TOOK MY VISITORS ALL OVER THE HOUSE. I BADE THEM SEARCH... SEARCH WELL...'



'THE OFFICERS WERE SATISFIED. THEY SAT AND CHATTED OF FAMILIAR THINGS. BUT ERE LONG I HEARD A LOW, DULL, QUICK SOUND...'



THUM-THUMP!
THUM-THUMP!
THUM-THUMP!

'IT GREW LOUDER...LOUDER...LOUDER! WAS IT POSSIBLE THEY HEARD NOT? NO! NO! THEY HEARD! THEY SUSPECTED! THEY KNEW! THEY WERE MAKING A MOCKERY OF MY HORROR...'



THUM-THUMP!
THUM-THUMP!
THUM-THUMP!

'LOUDER...LOUDER...LOUDER...UNTIL I SHRIEKED...'

VILLAINS! I ADMIT THE DEED! TEAR UP THE PLANKS... HERE! IT IS THE BEATING OF HIS HIDEOUS HEART!



A CALM DESCENDED OVER MARVIN. HE CLOSED THE BOOK, SMILING...

OF COURSE! IT WAS ALL IN MY MIND...JUST AS IN POE'S TALE, THE BEATING OF THE HEART WAS ALL IN THE MURDERER'S MIND!



HE STOOD UP, SIGHING. OUTSIDE, THE DRIFTING MIST WAS LIFTING. IT WAS MORNING. SUDDENLY...

WHAT'S THAT? KNOCKING... ON THE FRONT DOOR!



MARVIN WENT TO THE DOOR. HE OPENED IT. THE THREE MEN STOOD THERE...

GOOD MORNING, MR. COURTNEY!

WE'RE FROM THE LOCAL PREGINCT.

WE'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU!

THE... GASP... THE POLICE!?

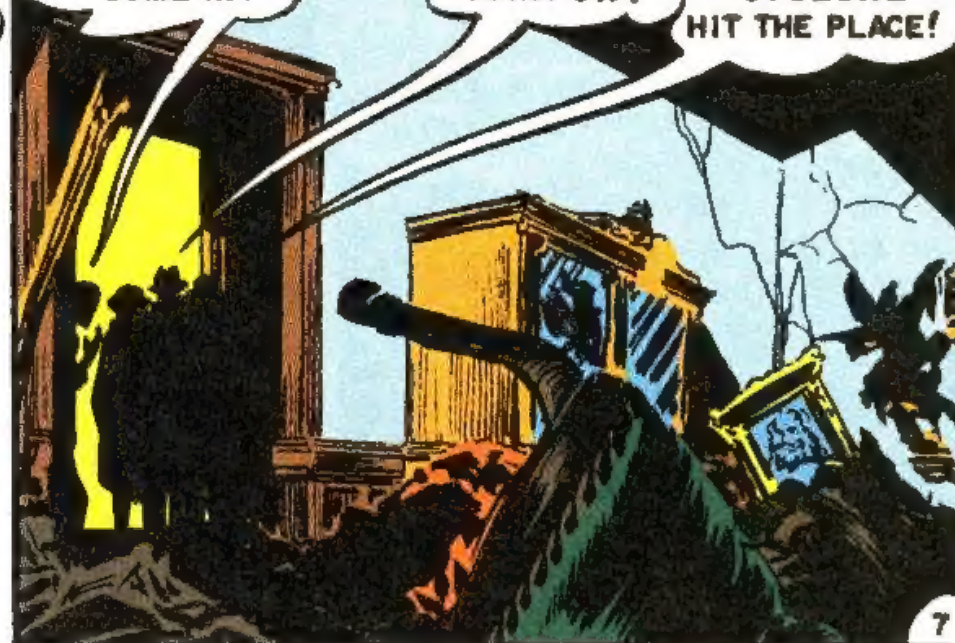


MARVIN STEELED HIMSELF. HE SMILED. HE WOULDN'T MAKE THE STUPID MISTAKE THE MURDERER IN THE POE STORY MADE. NO. HE'D BE CAREFUL...

COME IN, GENTLEMEN! COME IN!

SAY. WHAT'S GOING ON?

LOOKS LIKE A CYCLONE HIT THE PLACE!



MARVIN SMILED...

WE'RE HAVING
A **PLUMBING**
JOB DONE.
IT'S **NOTHING!**
I...

THUM-
THUMP!
THUM-
THUMP!
THUM-
THUMP...

WAIT!
LISTEN...

THE OLD HOUSE WAS SILENT SAVE
FOR THE THROBBING SOUND. NO!
MARVIN GRITTED HIS TEETH! **NO,**
HE WOULDN'T FALL FOR THEIR
TRICK...

WHAT'S THAT
BEATING
SOUND...LIKE...
LIKE A **HEART?**

SOUND? I
DON'T HEAR
ANY
SOUND!

IT'S
BACK
THERE!

ONE OF THEM POINTED TO THE
LIBRARY WALL. ANOTHER PICKED UP
THE AXE WHERE IT HAD BEEN DROPPED.
THEY WERE CLEVER. WELL, MARVIN
WOULD BE **CLEVERER!**...

GENTLEMEN!
I DON'T
HEAR A
THING!

THEN
YOU
MUST BE
DEAF, MR.
COURTNEY!

CHOP IT
DOWN,
FRED. IT'S
BACK HERE!

THEY BEGAN TO CHOP. THE THROBBING DIED. MARVIN
WAITED, SMILING. LUTHER'S BODY WAS IN THE CEL-
LAR. MARVIN WASN'T GOING TO BE FOOLISH. **HE**
WASN'T GOING TO **ADMIT ANYTHING...**

GOOD LORD!

WHAT
IS IT?

IT'S A
BODY!

GILBERT!

YOU'D...YOU'D
BETTER GET YOUR
COAT, MR.
COURTNEY.
WE'RE **ARREST-**
ING YOU ON
SUSPICION OF
MURDER...

NO! NO! I
DIDN'T KILL
GILBERT. I
KILLED LUTHER,
BUT...NOT...GIL...
OH...

SO YOU KILLED
LUTHER, TOO,
EH? O.K.!
WHERE'D YOU
HIDE **HIS BODY?**

MARVIN TOOK THEM DOWN INTO THE
CELLAR. WHILE THEY UNCOVERED
LUTHER'S BODY, HE CONFESSED...

I **DIDN'T KILL**
GILBERT! I
LOVED HIM AND
HE LOVED ME. HE
WANTED TO **SAVE**
ME FROM **KILLING**
LUTHER. ONLY
LUTHER **CAUGHT HIM**
AND **KILLED HIM FIRST!**
THAT'S WHAT MUST HAVE
HAPPENED...

HE'S TELLIN'
THE **TRUTH,**
ALL RIGHT,
BOYS. THERE'S
LUTHER...
AND **LOOK...**

THEY POINTED AT THE GAPING HOLE
IN LUTHER'S CHEST...

HIS
HEART!
IT'S
GONE!

SO **THAT'S**
WHAT WE
HEARD!
LUTHER'S
HEART LED US
TO **GILBERT'S**
BODY... AND MARVIN
WAS SO **SHOCKED** AT
SEEING IT HE **CON-**
FESSED TO MURDER-
ING LUTHER!

LET'S
GO, MR.
COURTNEY!

HEE, HEE! SO THAT'S MY YARN, BOILS
AND GHOULS. MARVIN **REALLY DID**
HEAR LUTHER'S HEARTBEAT AFTER
ALL. IT **WASN'T** IN HIS **MIND** LIKE IN
THE **POE STORY.** INCIDENTALLY,
YOU MAY BE WONDERING WHY THE
THREE **DETECTIVES** STOPPED
BY THE HOUSE THAT MORNING. NO,
IT **WASN'T** LIKE IN THE **POE STORY,**
EITHER. A NEIGHBOR **DIDN'T**
HEAR **SHRIEKS.** THE DICKS
WERE JUST TRYING TO SELL THE
COURTNEYS **THREE TICKETS** TO

THE **LOCAL POLICE-**
MAN'S BALL. AND
NOW, THE **VAULT-**
KEEPER AWAITS
WITH **HIS REVOLT-**
ING READING
MATERIAL. **DIG**
YOU LATER... 8

THE VAULT-KEEPER'S **E.C. CLASSIC**

HEH, HEH! AND NOW, FIENDS... A *TREAT!*
LET'S GO *BACK* INTO THE *PAST*... BACK
THREE AND A HALF YEARS... TO THE
VERY FIRST ISSUE OF MY MAG, *THE*
VAULT OF HORROR. LET'S RETCH AGAIN
TO THIS *E.C. CLASSIC*...



IT ALL STARTED THE DAY I DECIDED TO RUN AWAY
FROM RALPH! HE WAS GOING TO *KILL ME!* I *KNEW*
THAT! I HAD TO GET AWAY! I PACKED A SMALL BAG
AND HAILED A TAXI...

THE RAILROAD TERMINAL...
AND PLEASE HURRY!

YES,
MA'AM!



AS THE TAXI SPED DOWNTOWN, I HUDDLED IN THE CORNER
OF THE SEAT... AFRAID THAT HE MIGHT SEE ME! RALPH
HATED ME SO! I DON'T REMEMBER HOW IT STARTED
BUT IT HAD DEVELOPED TO A POINT WHERE I FEARED
FOR MY LIFE! I REMEMBER ONE DAY, RALPH CAME
HOME WITH A PACKAGE...

WHAT DID YOU
BUY, RALPH?

OH... NOTHING, GLORIA DEAR!
SOMETHING FOR MY OWN
PERSONAL USE!



IT WAS **POISON!** I HAD TO BE ON MY GUARD! I WATCHED THE BOTTLE CAREFULLY AND WHEN I NOTICED SOME OF THE POISON MISSING, I DIDN'T EAT... PRETENDING SOME EXCUSE! I WAS CAREFUL. HE **FAILED** THAT TIME!



I PAID THE FARE, AND LOOKED UP AND DOWN THE STREET! I DIDN'T SEE RALPH! I RUSHED INTO THE STATION!



I STUFFED THE TICKET INTO MY PURSE AND LOOKED AROUND! IF RALPH EVER CAUGHT ME DOING THIS... I DROVE THE THOUGHT FROM MY MIND! **NO!** I WOULD GET AWAY! I **HAD** TO! I WOULD BE **SAFE** THEN! I SAT DOWN ON A BENCH IN A CORNER OF THE WAITING ROOM, AND HID BEHIND A NEWSPAPER.



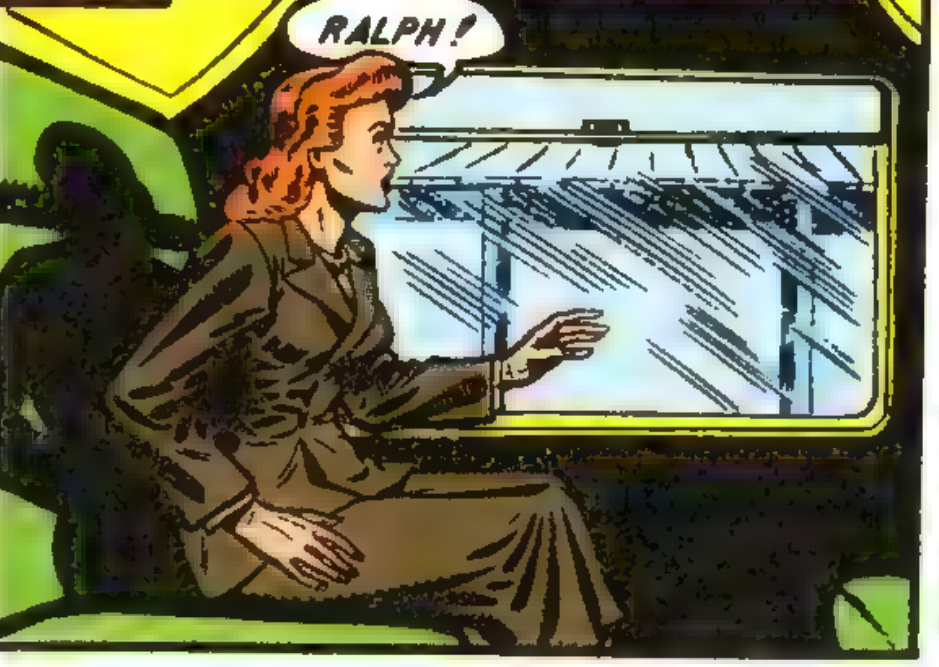
MY TRAIN WASN'T DUE FOR TWENTY MINUTES! SUPPOSE RALPH CALLED AT HOME? THERE WOULD BE NO ANSWER! HE WOULD **KNOW!** I THOUGHT OF THAT NIGHT LAST MONTH WHEN I AWOKE TO FIND RALPH STANDING OVER ME... A KITCHEN KNIFE IN HIS HAND...



HE HAD STAMMERED OUT A LAME EXCUSE! HE WAS GOING TO **MURDER** ME AND I HAD DISCOVERED HIM IN TIME! I DIDN'T SLEEP THE REST OF THAT NIGHT... I JUST **LAY** THERE... **LISTENING**...



I WENT OUT TO THE PLATFORM AND BOARDED THE TRAIN! I FOUND MY SEAT! WHY DIDN'T WE START? I GLANCED OUT OF THE WINDOW! SOMEONE WAS RUNNING DOWN THE PLATFORM! IT... IT LOOKED LIKE...



AS THE TRAIN BEGAN TO MOVE, THE MAN SWUNG HIMSELF UP INTO THE CAR BEHIND MINE! I WASN'T SURE! IT **COULD** BE RALPH! IT... **LOOKED** LIKE HIM... AND YET... I WAS FRIGHTENED! IT WAS TOO **LATE** TO GET OFF! THE TRAIN WAS ON ITS WAY.



I MADE MY WAY TO THE CLUB CAR! IT WAS SMOKEY AND CROWDED! I SLIPPED ONTO A STOOL AT THE BAR...

WHAT'LL IT BE, LADY?

I... I'LL HAVE A SCOTCH AND SODA, PLEASE!



THE DRINK BURNED GOING DOWN! I SHUDDERED! SUDDENLY A REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR CAUGHT MY EYE!

...GASP...
RALPH!



I WAS AFRAID TO TURN AROUND! IT WAS RALPH! I HAD SEEN HIM IN THE MIRROR! HAD HE SEEN ME? I STEPPED AWAY FROM THE BAR AND RAN FROM THE CAR!

OH... I BEG YOUR PARDON?

EXCUSE ME, LADY!



I HAD GONE OUT THE WRONG END OF THE CLUB CAR! I WAS IN A COACH... NOT A PULLMAN! IF I WANTED TO GET BACK TO MY CAR, I WOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE CLUB CAR AGAIN...

ER... IS THIS SEAT TAKEN?

WHY, NOT THAT I KNOW OF!



RALPH WOULDN'T LOOK FOR ME HERE IN THE COACHES! HE KNEW I ALWAYS TRAVELED PULLMAN! I SAT DOWN! I WOULD WAIT TILL IT WAS SAFE AND THEN SNEAK BACK TO MY BERTH!



I THOUGHT ABOUT GETTING OFF THE TRAIN AT THE NEXT STOP... BUT ALL MY CLOTHES... MY MONEY... MY TICKET... WERE IN THE OTHER CAR! WHY DID HE WANT TO KILL ME? I REMEMBERED ONE NIGHT, ABOUT THE TIME THAT IT ALL STARTED...

GLORIA! I'VE TAKEN OUT SOME INSURANCE POLICIES! LIFE INSURANCE! IF... SOMETHING HAPPENS TO EITHER OF US... THE OTHER GETS \$25,000!

OH? I... I SEE RALPH!



PERHAPS THAT WAS IT! THE MONEY! \$25,000 IS A LOT OF MONEY! SUDDENLY, MY HEART STOPPED! I FELT A HAND ON MY SHOULDER...

YOUR TICKET, MISS?

OH! I... I LEFT IT IN THE OTHER CAR!



THE CONDUCTOR LOOKED AT ME QUIZZICALLY! HE MUST HAVE THOUGHT I WAS TRYING TO RIDE FREE!

NO, REALLY! I'VE A BERTH BACK IN THE PULLMANS!

YOU'D BETTER SHOW ME, MISS!



AS WE PASSED THROUGH THE CLUB CAR AGAIN, I SEARCHED THE FACES OF THE PEOPLE! RALPH WASN'T THERE! PERHAPS I HAD MADE A MISTAKE! THE DRINK! MAYBE IT HAD BEEN THE SCOTCH AND SODA!

THIS IS MY BERTH! I'LL GET MY TICKET!

ALL RIGHT, MISS!



THE CONDUCTOR WAS SATISFIED! MY BERTH WAS MADE UP, AND SINCE I FELT A LITTLE DIZZY FROM THE DRINK, I DECIDED TO GET SOME SLEEP!

IT MUST HAVE BEEN SOMEONE WHO LOOKED LIKE RALPH! I'LL FEEL BETTER IN THE MORNING...

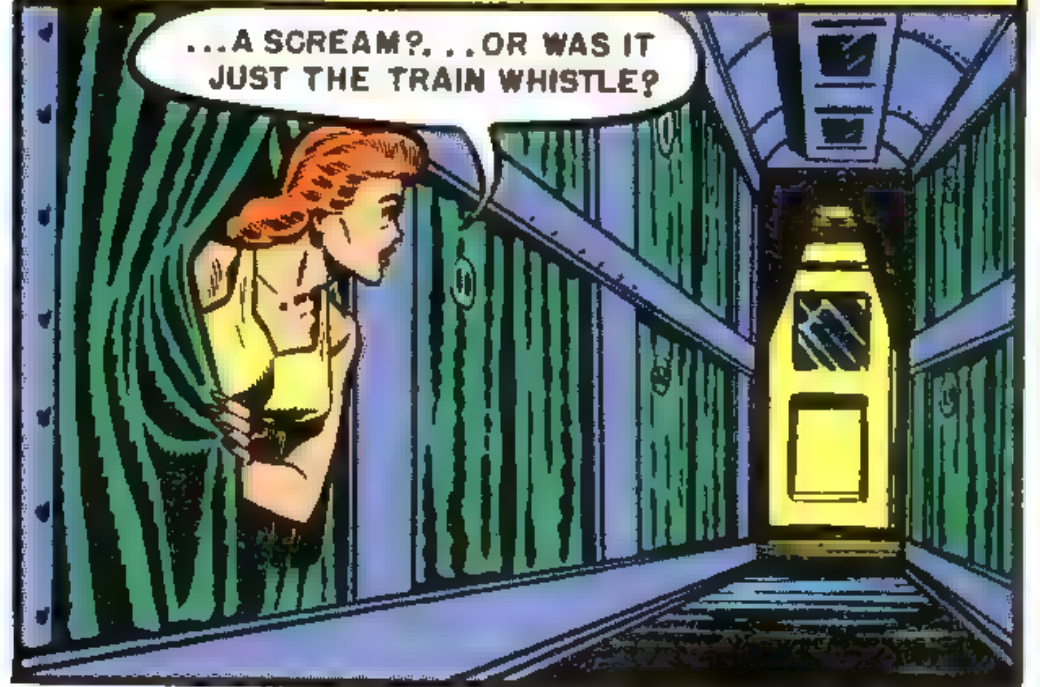


...AND SAFER, TOO! THE TRAIN, HURTLING THROUGH THE NIGHT, WAS PUTTING MORE AND MORE MILES BETWEEN RALPH AND ME! I CLOSED MY EYES! THE TRAIN RUMBLED ON... AND ON... AND I FELT MYSELF DRIFTING INTO SLEEP... SLEEP...



SUDDENLY I WAS AWAKENED BY AN EAR-SPLITTING, PIERCING SHRIEK! I LOOKED OUT OF MY BERTH! THE CURTAINS ON THE OTHER BERTHS WERE ALL CLOSED... AND THE CAR WAS DARK EXCEPT FOR A SMALL LIGHT AT THE REAR! WHAT WAS THAT I HAD HEARD?

...A SCREAM?... OR WAS IT JUST THE TRAIN WHISTLE?



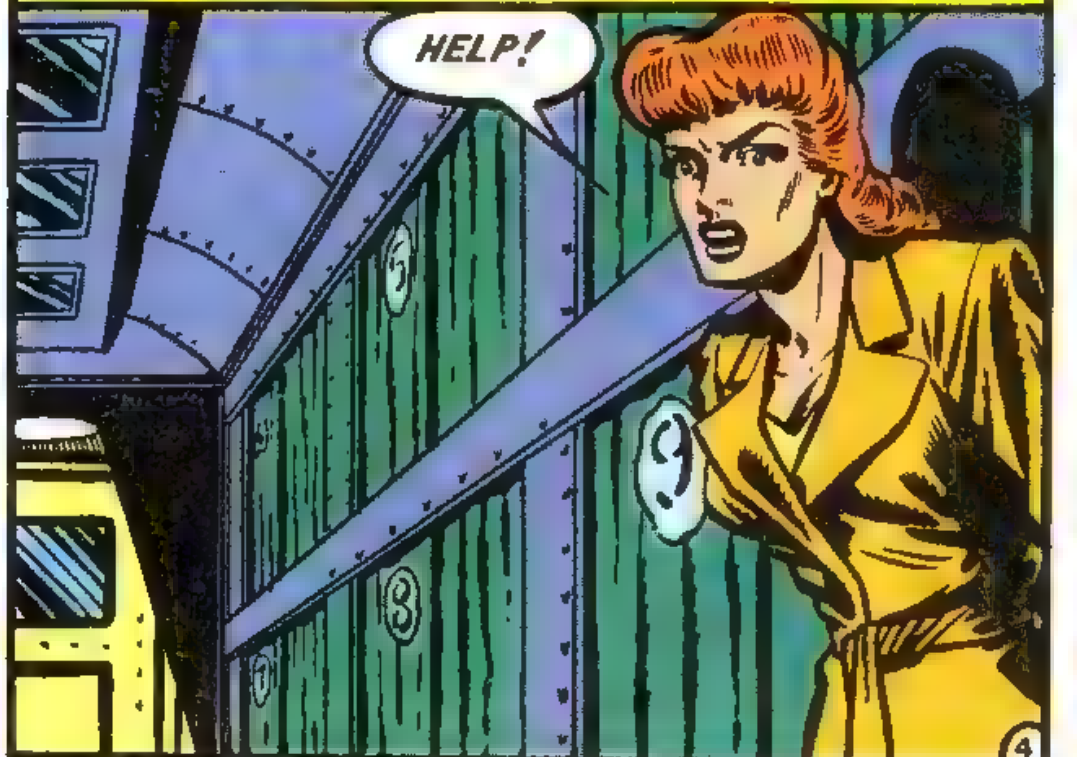
A BERTH AT THE FAR END OF THE CAR WAS MARKED "PORTER". I MADE MY WAY TOWARD IT! I'D ASK HIM IF HE HAD HEARD IT TOO! I PULLED ASIDE THE CURTAIN!

...GASP... NO! NO! EEEEEEEK!



IT WAS GHASTLY! HE WAS DEAD! COLD AND STIFF! HIS EYES, WIDE WITH HORROR... THE BEDCLOTHES SMEARED WITH BLOOD! I CLOSED THE CURTAINS...

HELP!



THERE WAS NO ANSWER! NO ONE STIRRED! I CRIED OUT AGAIN! COULDN'T THEY HEAR ME? FRANTICALLY, I TORE ASIDE THE CURTAINS OF THE NEXT BERTH...

AAAAAAAAAH!



IT WAS HORRIBLE! THE OCCUPANT OF *THAT* BERTH WAS DEAD, TOO! ICY FINGERS CLOSED ABOUT MY HEART! A WAVE OF NAUSEA SWEEPED OVER ME AS I WENT FROM BERTH TO BERTH, FLINGING THE CURTAINS BACK! THEY WERE DEAD... ALL DEAD! I WAS ON A DEATH TRAIN! RALPH! IT *WAS* RALPH! HE WAS *MAD*!

HE MUST BE ON THE TRAIN...
LOOKING FOR ME...



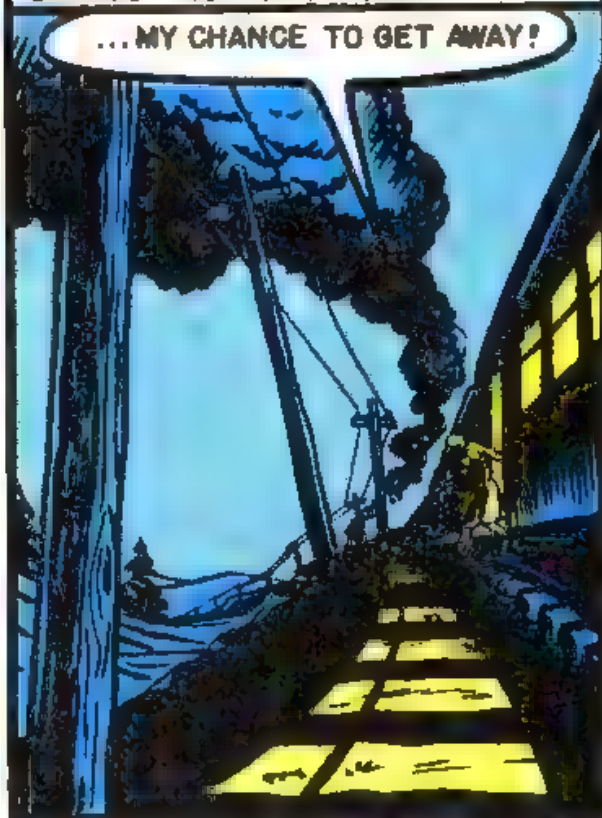
SUDDENLY, I HEARD THE SHRIEK AGAIN... AND I WAS THROWN TO THE FLOOR! THIS TIME IT *HAD* BEEN THE SHRIEK OF BRAKES... THE TRAIN HAD COME TO A STOP...

THIS... THIS IS MY CHANCE!



I RAN TO THE END OF THE CAR AND LEAPED FROM THE TRAIN...

...MY CHANCE TO GET AWAY!



AS I STOOD BEHIND A TREE...WATCHING, THE TRAIN BEGAN TO MOVE! SQUEEING...STRAINING...SLOWLY...IT GAINED MOMENTUM! IT WAS PULLING AWAY...AND I HAD ESCAPED!

NO ONE GOT OFF WITH ME...
I... I'M SAFE!



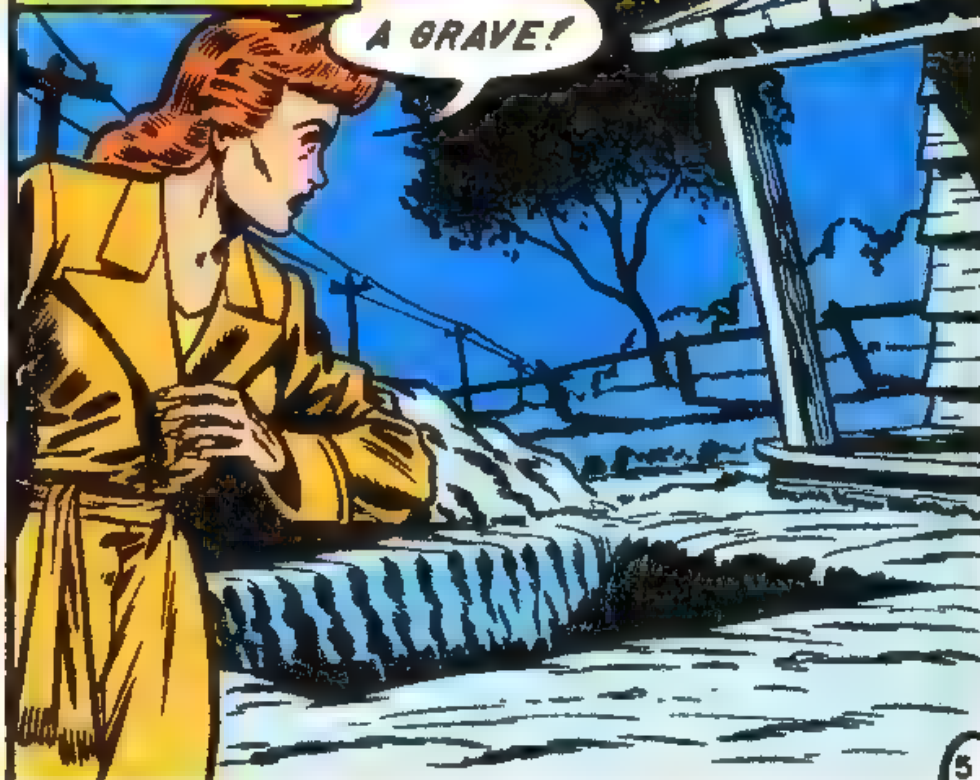
I LOOKED AROUND ME! A HOUSE! I SAW A HOUSE ON THE TOP OF THE HILL...AND THERE WAS A LIGHT ON! I MADE MY WAY THROUGH THE GRASS TOWARD IT!

IF THEY HAVE A PHONE, I'LL CALL THE POLICE!
THEY COULD STOP THE TRAIN AT THE NEXT STATION...



NEAR THE HOUSE, I NOTICED SOMETHING STRANGE! SOMEONE HAD BEEN DIGGING... A YAWNING BLACK PIT... THE SHAPE...OF...

A GRAVE!



NOW I WAS LETTING MY IMAGINATION GET THE BETTER OF ME! I PUSHED THE THOUGHT OUT OF MY MIND! WHY DID I THINK IT WAS A GRAVE? WHAT WAS SO STRANGE ABOUT AN EXCAVATION NEAR A FARM HOUSE? THEY WERE PROBABLY MAKING A WATER TROUGH! I KNOCKED ON THE DOOR...

ANYONE IN THERE? OPEN THE DOOR! PLEASE...



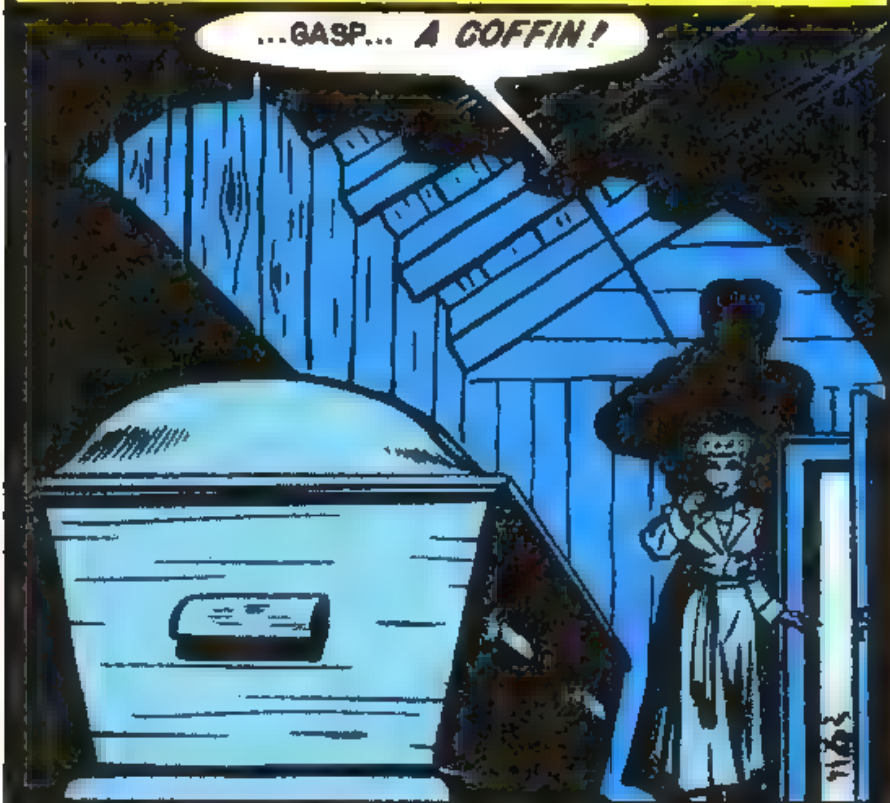
THERE WAS NO ANSWER. THEN, I HEARD THE LATCH CLICK AND THE DOOR SLOWLY SWUNG OPEN...THE RUSTY HINGES CREAKING...

H...HELLO? ANYONE...HOME?



I STEPPED INSIDE! I LOOKED AROUND! THE ROOM WAS BARE EXCEPT FOR...

...GASP... A COFFIN!



I SPUN AROUND! THE DOOR WAS CLOSED BEHIND ME...AND STANDING IN FRONT OF IT WAS...

RALPH!

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU, GLORIA!



HE CAUGHT ME IN A VISE-LIKE GRIP! I CRIED OUT! I STRUGGLED, BUT I COULD NOT FIGHT HIS OVERWHELMING STRENGTH!

NO NEED TO SCREAM, GLORIA. NO ONE WILL HEAR YOU.

LET ME GO! LET ME GO!



HE FORCED ME TO THE COFFIN!

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO ME, RALPH?

DON'T YOU KNOW, GLORIA?



I COULD DO NOTHING! HE CLOSED THE LID OF THE COFFIN... DOWN UPON ME... AND I HEARD THE SHARP BLOWS OF A HAMMER! HE WAS NAILING ME IN...

RALPH! PLEASE... HAVE MERCY!



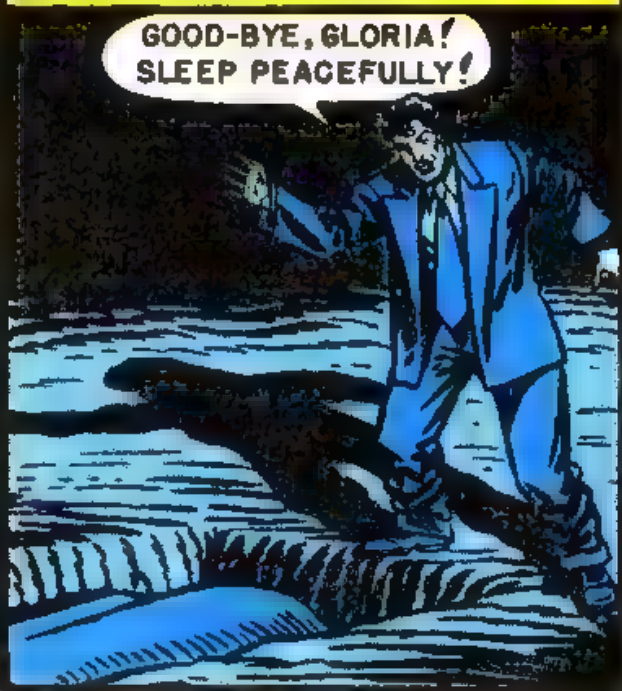
THEN I FELT THE COFFIN BEING DRAGGED ACROSS THE FLOOR! I HEARD THE SQUEAK OF THE RUSTY HINGES AS RALPH OPENED THE DOOR...

HE'S TAKING ME OUTSIDE... TO... TO THAT GRAVE!



I FELT THE JAR AND HEARD THE HOLLOW BOOM OF THE COFFIN AS RALPH PUSHED ME INTO THE GRAVE... THEN HIS FIENDISH LAUGHTER... HIS HYSTERICAL RAVING...

GOOD-BYE, GLORIA! SLEEP PEACEFULLY!



HE WAS FILLING IN THE GRAVE! THE SOFT EARTH THUDDED ON THE COFFIN LID! THEN... ALL WAS QUIET! I GUESS I BROKE DOWN AT THAT POINT...

HELP... SOB... HELP ME... SOMEBODY... PLEASE... PLEASE!



I WAS CRAZED WITH FEAR! I WAS GOING TO SUFFOCATE... BURIED ALIVE BY A MADMAN... MY HUSBAND... RALPH! I POUNDED ON THE COFFIN! I COULD FEEL THE FLESH OF MY FISTS TEAR AS I POUNDED! I LOST ALL CONTROL! I SCREAMED AND BEAT THE SIDES OF THE COFFIN...



SUDDENLY THERE WAS A BLINDING LIGHT! I SAT UP WITH A START AND LOOKED AROUND ME...

HERE SHE IS, GENTLEMEN!

YOU'D BETTER STOP THAT RACKET, LADY... AND COME QUIETLY!



I... I HAD BEEN *DREAMING*! I WAS *STILL* IN MY BERTH ON THE TRAIN! AND RALPH, WITH PITY IN HIS EYES, WAS COMFORTING ME... STROKING MY HAND!

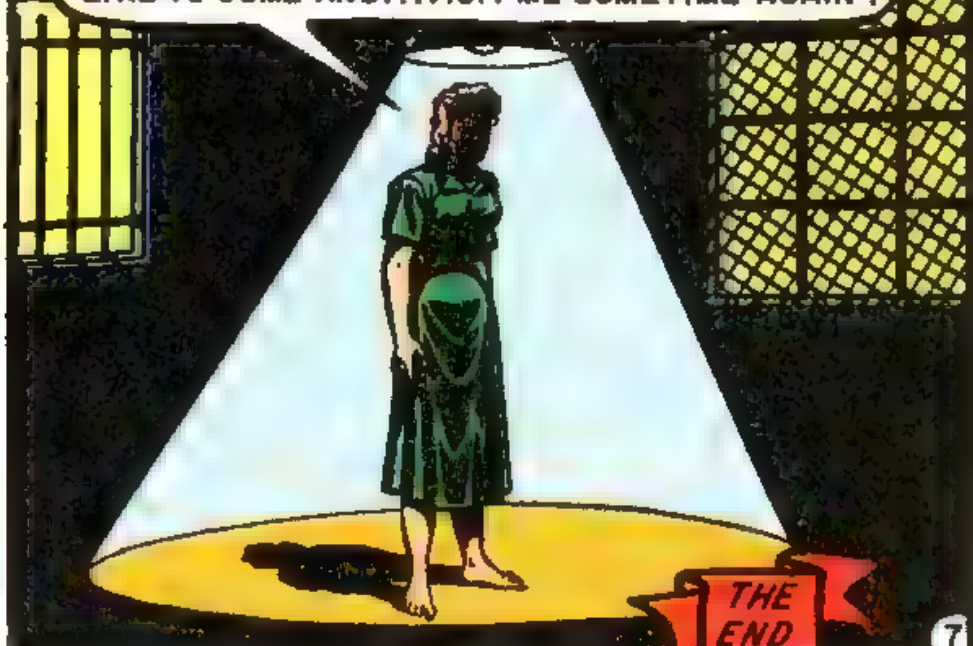
NO! KEEP AWAY! TAKE HIM AWAY FROM ME! HE WANTS TO KILL ME!

SURE, LADY! SURE! YOU COME WITH US! WE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU! HE WON'T HURT YOU! WE'LL SEE TO THAT!



THE MEN IN WHITE TOOK ME AWAY! THEY PUT ME IN A NICE HOUSE WITH NICE PEOPLE... A HOUSE THAT HAS BARS ON ALL THE WINDOWS SO RALPH CAN'T GET IN AND KILL ME! AND NOW I'M SAFE FROM HIM!

...AND THAT'S MY STORY! PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO COME AND... VISIT ME SOMETIME AGAIN?



THE END



THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

President and CEO—Stephen A. Geppi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear Old Witch,

Re: issue #18, the cover and lead-in picture abound with wonderfully gruesome creepy-crawlies, but they have no tie-in to any of the stories! Was this a way to stimulate sales?

The tie-in in "Pipe Down!", the unusual habit of Andrew, was good use of foreshadowing. The alert reader – and EC readers are alert – knew that quirk would figure prominently later on in the story. Rather like the carousel unicorn's horn in the Dirty Harry movie "Sudden Impact."

"Bedtime Gory!" was a bit of a stretch. A little discretion or a little empathy for the other person would work wonders for the antagonist. But no. To feed their wicked ego (and save the story!), the antagonist has to tell all; to reveal what twisted impulses make them tick, to continue their mistreatment of their fellow humans.

"Pot Shot!" provides just one more reason why one should not smoke (one's tires) when one is under the influence of pot (shot). Just what Amboy gained (besides weight) by being in such a hurry to gain gold is beyond me. He had all he needed anyway, so what was the rush? I guess impetuous in travel, impetuous in all things, eh?

The fate of the incidental character Mrs. Foley's in "The Black Ferris!" seemed deserved. Oh, sure, she helped the plot along a little. But ungrateful! Here the two boys go to a great deal of trouble to warn her, catch their death of colds, and is she appreciative? Nah! I hope they got a nice reward for helping recover her money – like, getting their doctor bills paid

Bob Gorby

Camarillo, CA

I've never thought Andrew's 'quirk' unusual – doesn't everyone read poetry? We sure do, see almost any installment of The Crypt-Keeper Crumb's "Fine Arts" pages in many of these EC comics! –OW

Dear Mr. Cochran,

Some time ago – February 8, 1995, to be exact – I wrote you to let you know how happy you'd made me with your wonderful chronological-ordered EC reprints. I have no way to know if you ever got said letter. It's a matter of real concern to me that you may learn how much I appreciate and thank your magnificent effort for the survival of that unforgettable line of comics; you are keeping the cauldron bubbling, after over 50 years some misguided people tried to extinguish the flames under it, and that deed of your has much merit, in my opinion, and should be celebrated the way it's entitled to

Besides, there is the question of getting ALL your reprints at a reasonable cost. I have the problem of limited funds (who doesn't?) and I'm trying to complete the entire collection of your mags, even repeating those I have in

Spanish, Ballantine Paperbacks or East Coast, but my purveyor is now charging me \$40.00 for each volume of 5 mags, and that's quite heavy for my pocket. Not that those splendid comics aren't worth of more, I repeat; but let's also be realistic. I plan to continue buying them at any cost, but would appreciate some cut down in expenses, if possible.

Receive my very warm and sincere applause, and get a friendly handshake from this Southern tiny country, through this letter from your friend.

Carlos M. Federici

Montevideo, URUGUAY

Look at the back issue info at the conclusion of this column, you'll likely get off cheaper buying from us direct. The more you buy, the more you save (on shipping)!

–OW

Russ,

HAUNT OF FEAR #19 . EC horror at its very best.

David Dellario

Kensington, CT

Best, bester, bestest!

–OW

NEXT ISSUE



Dear OW,

"Sucker Bait!" was a vampire story of a different (blood-) type. This was one horror yarn that kept me in the dark right up to the end. The device of using a radio-active isotope to track the vampire seemed wholly original, at least I haven't encountered it before. Well done, Witchy baby!

The bedroom scene in "Lover, Come Hack To Me!" must have been pretty racy stuff for a 50s comic (supposedly a kid's medium). It's touches of realism like these (among other things) that made EC the ground-breaking comics publisher we all celebrate today.

Is it just me, or are the "Grim Fairy-Tales" awfully same-y? I wish the editors had gotten away from the castles and medieval villages more often

Give CK the pennant; "Foul Play!" has got to be the most revolting, disgusting, just plain gory terror-tale EC ever printed! Congratulations CK! R.I.P. must stand for "Rest In Pieces!" EC you in my screams!

Barry McCollum

Alton, IL

I say our ECs were less a kids-only comic than our competitors' were, at a time when comics were less kids-only than they were for the 30 years following! Better to say comics then MIGHT be seen by any age and should have been designed accordingly.

-OW

Dear Old Witch,

HAUNT #18 was a real treat, from the [cover] and the opening pages of "Pipe Down!", both crammed with Ghastly's weird and forbidding cripple-crawley figures - his trademark feature but rarely more fascinating than here - right through to Jack Davis' masterful Bradbury rendition, "The Black Ferris!", with its sinister atmosphere and small-town youth depiction. In previous EC reprint letter columns some people have put down Jack Davis as a not-so-important artist, but I for my part feel that in stories like this he fully proves his worth

"Bedtime Gory!" is the less interesting of this issue's contents - predictable revenge story weighted down by George Evans' inability to put emotions to his faces (Lorna for instance practically looks the same all through the tale).

But the real gem of the book is the "Grim Fairy Tale," "Pot-Shot!", whose dialogue alone guarantees barrellfuls of belly-laughs (for the reader, that is - the main participant seems to prefer barrellfuls of buckshot). This is one of my all-time EC favorites, and one that I'll frequently turn to for sheer chuckles.

Keep on reprinting right to the end of the run - and preferably beyond!

Claus Simonsen

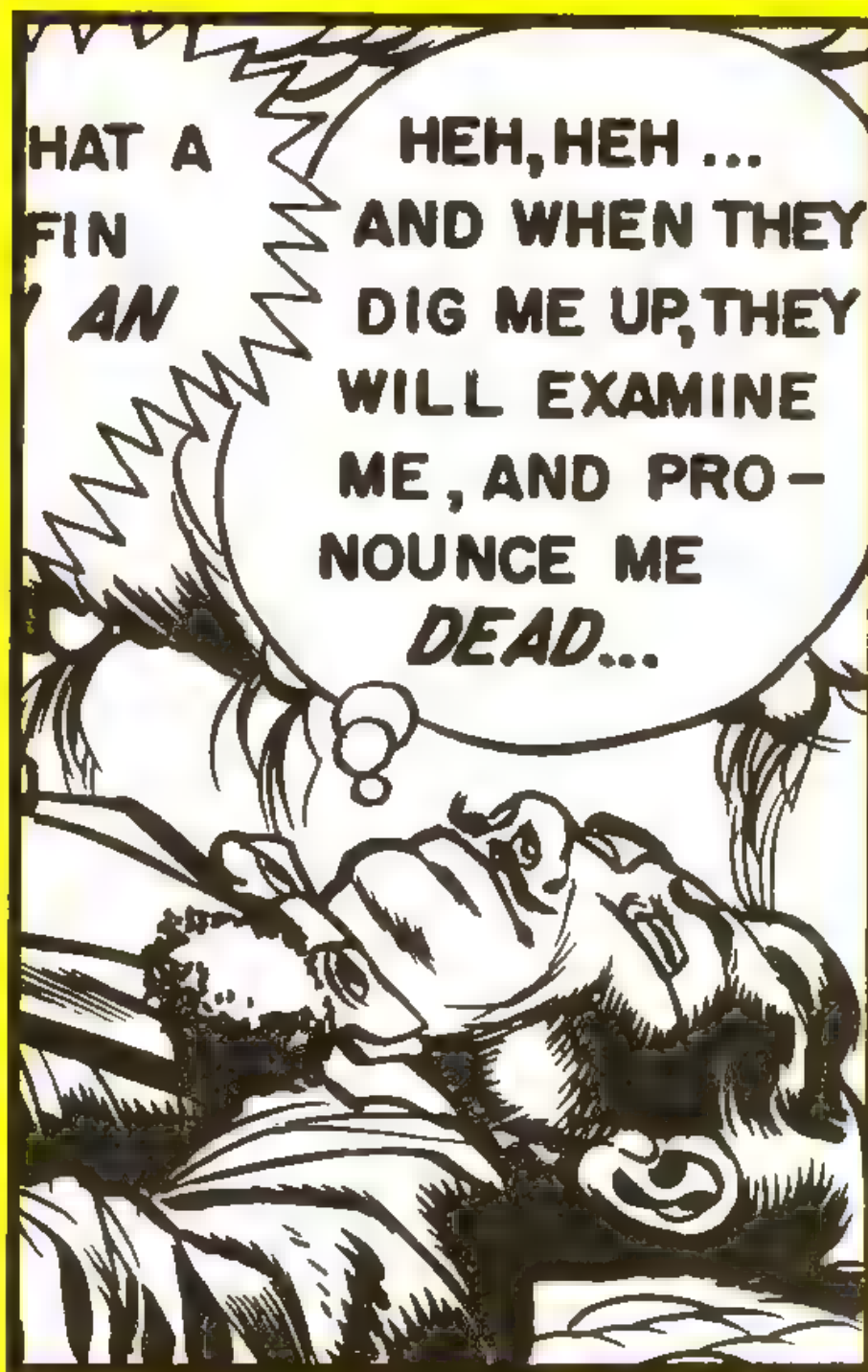
Samsoe, DENMARK

Where Ingels and Davis 'overact,' Evans and Craig characters often play it cool (boy, real cool) until that final, screaming (somebody turned on the light!) panel!

Ya know, as old as the anonymous editor is getting, he may be reprinting FROM beyond!

-OW

NEXT ISSUE



Also available this month are WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED TALES. Watch for HAUNT, CRIME and FRONTLINE COMBAT next month. Don't forget CRYPT, WEIRD SCIENCE and PANIC! Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic)!

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1, SOLD OUT; FRONT #1-4, \$2 each; PANIC #1-2, \$2.50 each; all others up thru issue #3, \$1.50 each, CRYPT, W SCI & SHOCK #4-16, and VAULT, W FAN, 2FIST, HAUNT and CRIME #4-15, \$2 each. All others, \$2.50 each (Latest issues: CRYPT, W SCI, VAULT, W FAN, 2FIST, HAUNT & CRIME are up to 20; FRONT to 9 and PANIC to 2)

Don't forget the entire 11-issue run of WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY/INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION (#1-3, \$1.50 each; #4-11, \$2 each) and the 18 issues of SHOCK SUSPENSESTORIES (#1-3, \$1.50 each; #4-15, \$2.00 each; #16-18, \$2.50 each)!

Add \$5 per order (\$10 outside US) for S&H.

We want MORE letters! Write to:

HAUNT
GEMSTONE
POB 469

WEST PLAINS MO 65775

THIS COMIC REPRINTS

HAUNT OF FEAR #20 (JUL/AUG 1953)

COVER by Graham Ingels

"Thump Fun!"

"Terror Train"

"Bloody Sure"

"Hyde and Go Shriek!"

Graham Ingels

Al Feldstein

Reed Crandall

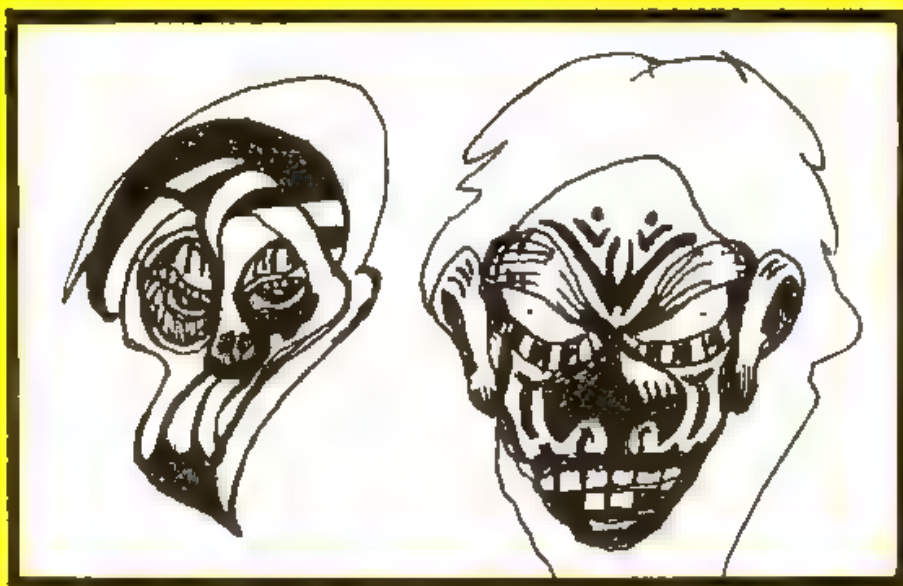
Jack Davis

We welcome letters of comment. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, accuracy and length. We automatically withhold street address and zip code unless you clearly state you wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters, to do so we need your address on the individual letter.



Klang! Bang! Thank you, man! Or, woman! Sex is not an issue on this page, we're an equal opportunity blow to the head employer. Erin Tinney, Los Molinos, CA, sends us this take on the fry pan scene in "Sink-Hole!", VAULT #5. Her skill with a skillet made sure he won't complain about runny eggs again! Kitchen hints and household tips in THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S PAGE OF...

FINE ARTS #55



It's been a while since I've run a drawing by our old warhorse, Kurt Krause, Fountain City, WI. These two guys may have seen better days (in fact, that's almost a certainty), but they're looking good here in The Crypt.

-CK

More rhyming words for the yearning herds of poem fans throughout the lands. Now that I've set the tone, take it, Frank. . .

-CK

THE VAMPIRES

The vampires had a picnic.
(A bloody good affair)
They brushed off the mold,
Congealing in their hair.
A toast to life eternal,
(Wishing Renfield were there).
And counting on the Count,
For a blood type rare!

Frank X. Mattson

'Spring City, PA

Send your contribs (not returnable, not too long, not too big, legible doublespaced text &/or bold black art. Warning...we edit) to:

THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S PAGE OF FINE ARTS

GEMSTONE

POB 469

WEST PLAINS MO 65775

We welcome contributions. We cannot promise to return, acknowledge or publish contributions. We edit for clarity, accuracy and size. We automatically withhold street address and zip code unless you clearly state you wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication, to do so we need your address on the individual contribution.

**WALDO KNEW THEY WERE WRONG
ABOUT ANNA. IN FACT, HE WAS...**

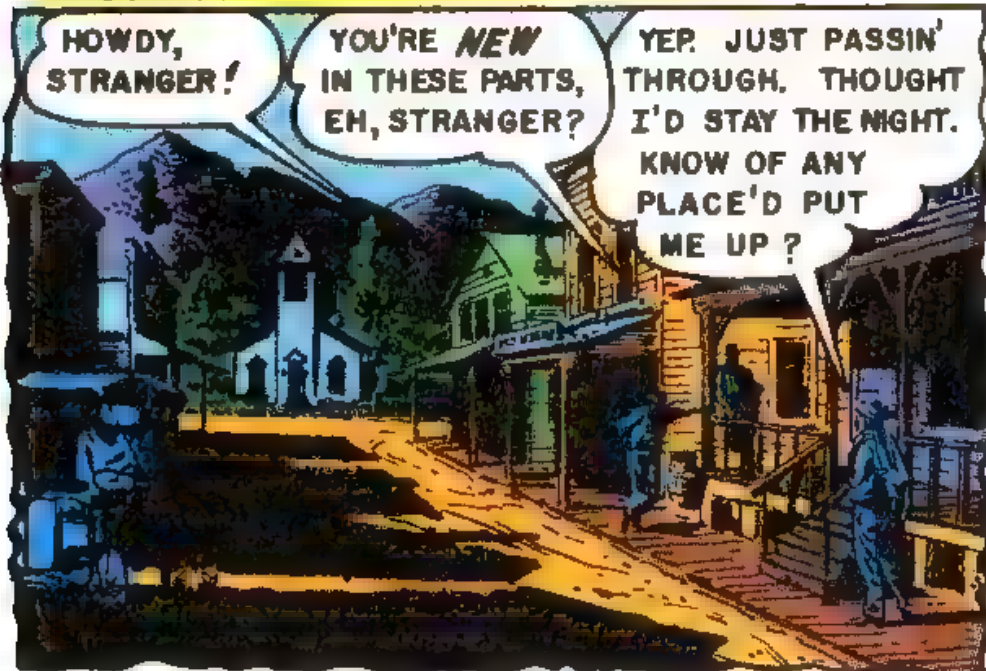
BLOODY SURE



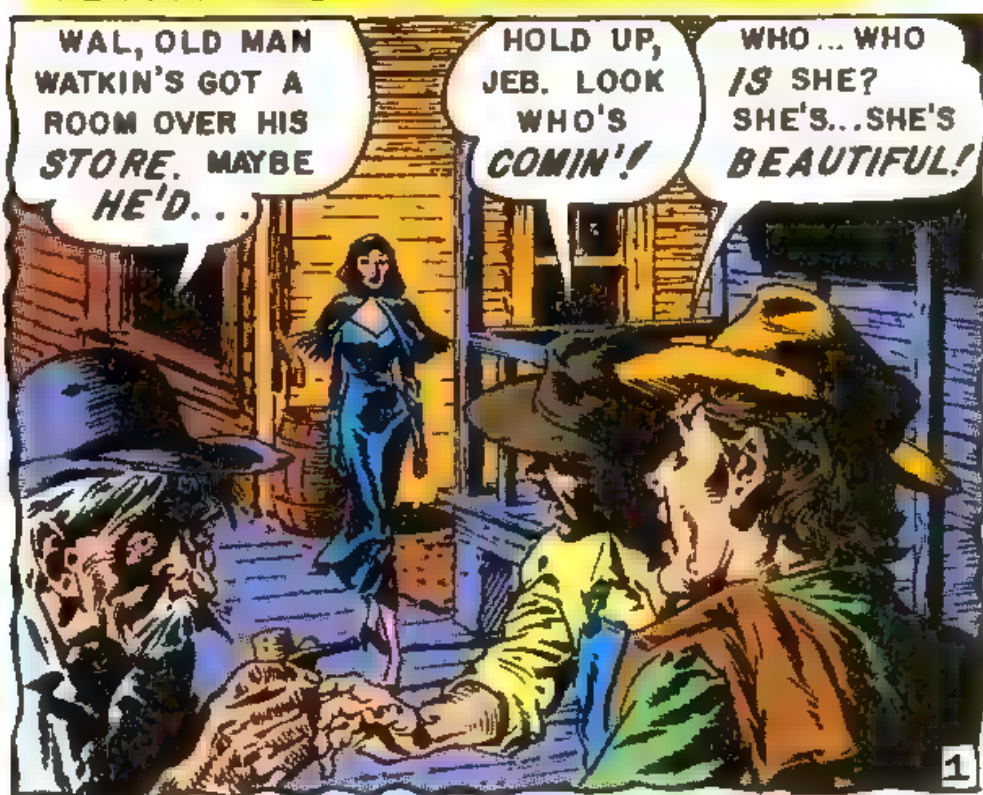
WALDO LAY STIFFLY, STARING UP AT THE DARK CABIN CEILING, LISTENING TO THE NIGHT SOUNDS AROUND HIM! HE LISTENED TO THE CHIRPING OF A CRICKET OUTSIDE... THE CROAKING OF A BULLFROG DOWN BY THE CREEK... THE UNEVEN BREATHING OF THE WOMAN LYING BESIDE HIM. ACROSS THE BARE CABIN ROOM, THE BOY STIRRED, TURNING OVER ON HIS COT. *HE WAS ASLEEP.* WALDO COULD *TELL.* BUT THE *WOMAN* LYING BESIDE HIM... HIS *BRIDE OF ONLY A FEW HOURS... WAS NOT!* SHE WAS *PRETENDING* TO BE ASLEEP... BUT WALDO KNEW SHE WAS *WIDE AWAKE...*



THEY'D *WARNED* WALDO ABOUT THIS WOMAN HE'D MARRIED TONIGHT. THEY'D *TOLD* HIM THINGS ABOUT HER... *THINGS* HE *WOULDN'T BELIEVE.* HE'D COME INTO THE LITTLE SLEEPY TOWN ONE EVENING AFTER SUNDOWN...



AND THEN HE'D SEEN HER. SHE'D COME GLIDING UP THE MAIN STREET LIKE A BLACK- DRAPED ANGEL...



THE MOMENT WALDO'D *SEEN* HER, HE'D *WANTED* HER. HE'D FELT THE FLAME DOWN DEEP INSIDE HIM LEAP HIGHER AND HIGHER AS SHE NEARED. AND AS SHE'D PASSED, HE'D FELT IT AS A ROARING INFERNO...

EVENING, GENTLEMEN!

HMMPH!

EVENIN', MA'AM!



THE OTHERS HAD SNUBBED HER, TURNING AWAY. BUT HE'D SMILED, GREETING HER, AND HE'D FELT HER EYES SWEEP OVER HIM... HUNGRILY...

EVENING... STRANGER!

THE NAME'S WALDO, MA'AM! WALDO BUCKLY!



SHE'D SMILED AT HIM, NODDED HER HEAD, AND PASSED ON UP THE STREET...

WATCH YOURSELF, STRANGER.

DON'T GO GETTIN' NO IDEAS 'BOUT HER, STRANGER!

WHO IS SHE?

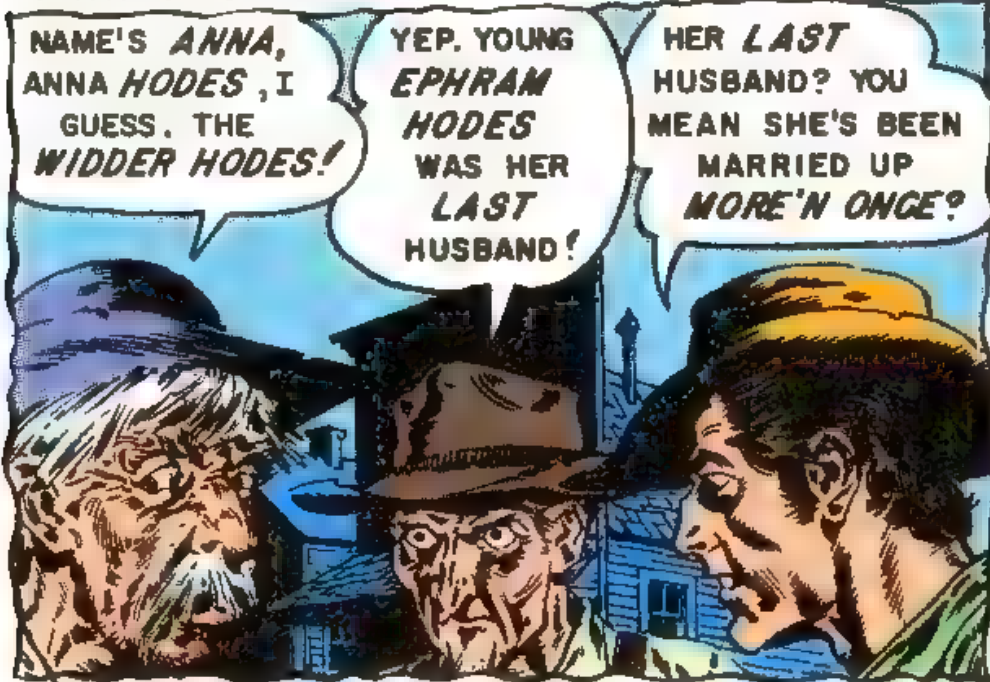


AND THEN THEY'D TOLD WALDO ABOUT HER. THEY'D SPEWED FORTH ALL OF THEIR SUSPICIONS AND SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT HER...

NAME'S ANNA, ANNA HODES, I GUESS. THE WIDDER HODES!

YEP. YOUNG EPHRAIM HODES WAS HER LAST HUSBAND!

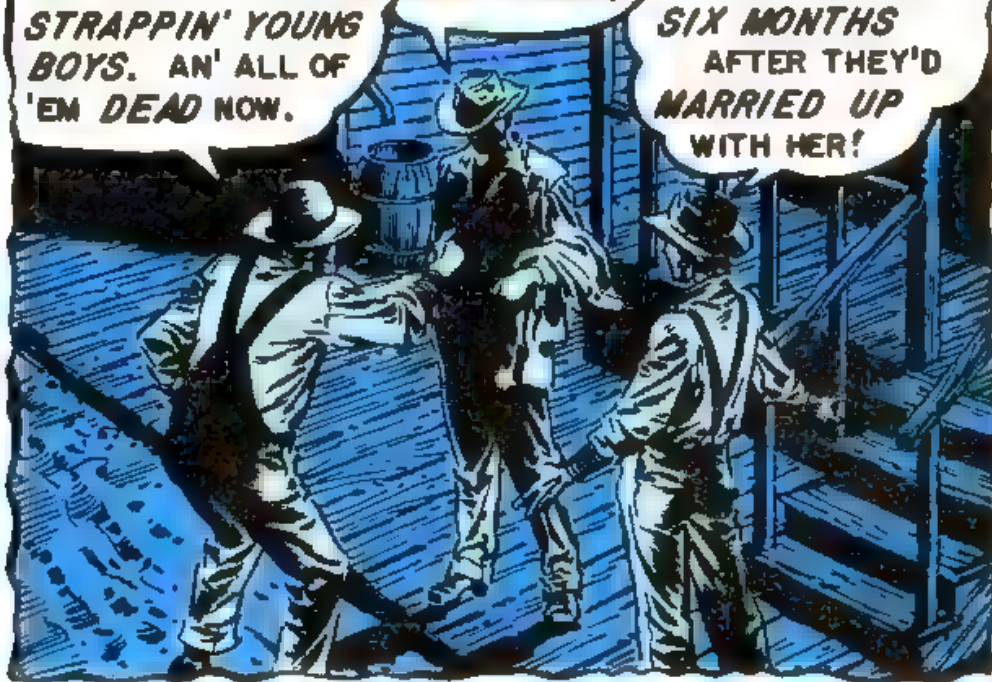
HER LAST HUSBAND? YOU MEAN SHE'S BEEN MARRIED UP MORE'N ONCE?



MARRIED UP FIVE TIMES, STRANGER. AN' ALL OF 'EM BIG STRAPPIN' YOUNG BOYS. AN' ALL OF 'EM DEAD NOW.

DEAD!? WHAT HAPPENED?

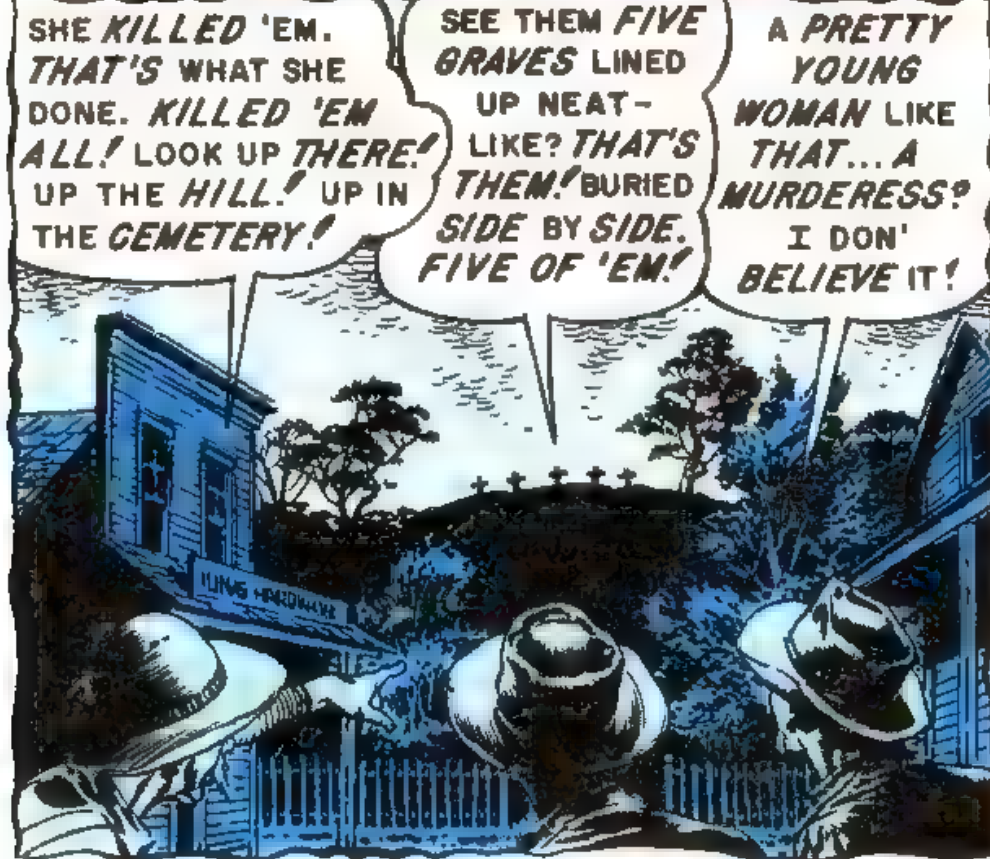
DON' KNOW FOR SURE! NONE OF 'EM LASTED MORE'N SIX MONTHS AFTER THEY'D MARRIED UP WITH HER!



SHE KILLED 'EM. THAT'S WHAT SHE DONE. KILLED 'EM ALL! LOOK UP THERE! UP THE HILL! UP IN THE GEMETERY!

SEE THEM FIVE GRAVES LINED UP NEAT-LIKE? THAT'S THEM! BURIED SIDE BY SIDE. FIVE OF 'EM!

A PRETTY YOUNG WOMAN LIKE THAT... A MURDERESS? I DON' BELIEVE IT!



THEY WAS ALL HEALTHY AND STRONG FELLERS WHEN THEY WENT DOWN TO HER CABIN T'LIVE WITH HER...

BUT EVERY TIME ONE OF 'EM WOULD COME BACK TO TOWN, HE'D LOOK WEAKER N' WEAKER AND GET PALER N' PALER... UNTIL FINALLY... LIKE THAT... POOF... HE'D PASS AWAY!



THEY'D TOLD WALDO WHAT THEY THOUGHT SHE WAS ...

SHE'S A **VAMPIRE**,
STRANGER! SHE
SUCKED THEIR
BLOOD...DRAINED
'EM ALL...LITTLE
BY LITTLE...

HER!...A VAMPIRE?
YOU'RE CRAZY!
SHE'S NO
VAMPIRE...

NO?
LISTEN!
ONE NIGHT,
'BOUT TWO
YEARS AGO,
I **SNUK UP TO**
HER CABIN...



'AN' I **PEERED IN HER WINDOW.** **HANK MORTON**, HER
FOURTH HUSBAND WAS ALIVE THEN. HE'D BEEN INTO
TOWN THAT AFTERNOON AND I'D SEEN WHAT HE
LOOKED LIKE. SO I WENT UP TO INVESTIGATE ...!

PLEASE, HANK, HONEY.
EAT YOUR SUPPER.
PLEASE. YOU NEED
THE STRENGTH.

I GAIN'T EAT, ANNA.
I JUS' GAIN'T! STEAK...
STEAK...EVERY NIGHT.
I JUS' GAIN'T EAT ANY
MORE OF IT!



WALDO'D LAUGHED AT THE OLD TIMER'S STORY...

SO **WHAT'S** SO BAD
ABOUT FEEDIN' A SICKLY
HUSBAND **STEAK?**

EVERY NIGHT? NIGHT
AFTER NIGHT? I'LL
TELL YOU. STEAKS...
NICE RARE STEAKS...
MAKE BLOOD, STRANGER!



AND HER **KID...THE BOY!**
HE'S SICKLY TOO!
PALE...LIKE A GHOST,
HE IS! SHE PROBABLY
SUCKS HIS BLOOD
TOO!

HER **BOY!?**
YOU MEAN
SHE'S GOT A
CHILD!

YEP. HE'S
TWELVE
NOW!
THINNEST,
SICKLIEST KID
YOU EVER SAW!



WALDO'D LAUGHED...

WELL, A **VAMPIRE**
CAIN'T HAVE NO **KID.**
SEE? THAT KILLS
YOUR THEORY...

WE DON'T
KNOW IF
IT'S HER
KID...



'SHE **CAME** HERE WITH IT...TEN
YEARS AGO...!

I'D LIKE TO BUY A
CABIN FOR ME
AND MY **BABY.**
DO YOU **KNOW**
OF ANY?

THE OLD
FERGERSON
PLACE IS UP
FOR SALE,
MA'AM!



'AN' SHE MOVED IN. AN' AFORE YOU
KNEW IT, SHE WAS COMIN' DOWN INTO
TOWN AT NIGHT, SEARCHIN' FOR A
HUSBAND ...!

EVENIN',
MA'AM.

EVENIN'! I'M
NEW 'ROUND HERE...
JUST MOVED IN.
WHAT'S A BODY DO
FOR ENTERTAINMENT?



'THAT'S THE ONLY TIME WE'D EVER SEE HER WAS AT NIGHT. POOR YOUNG HIRAM COTTSON FELL FOR HER FIRST. AND HE WAS DEAD WITHIN THE YEAR. AND THEN SHE WAS BACK AGAIN, IN HER WIDDER CLOTHES...LOOKIN' AGAIN...

SORRY 'BOUT YOUR HUSBAND, MA'AM!

THANK YOU, PHIL.



AND PHIL CRANE WAS SECOND AND BILLY GORDON...THIRD. AND THEN HANK MORTON. AND JUS' REGENT... EPHRAIM HODES. KILLED 'EM ALL. SUCKED THEIR BLOOD, THAT'S WHAT SHE DID!

I STILL WON'T BELIEVE SHE'S A VAMPIRE. IN FACT I'M SURE SHE'S NOT!



WALDO'D LISTENED TO THEIR INSANE THEORY. BUT HE'D KNOWN. DEEP WITHIN HIM, HIS CRAVING FOR THIS BEAUTIFUL WOMAN HAD TOLD HIM THEY WERE ALL WRONG...

DON'T SAY WE DIDN'T WARN YOU, STRANGER.

HERE SHE COMES... BACK UP THE STREET!

THANKS, GENTLEMEN, THANKS... AND GOOD EVENIN'!



YES, WALDO'D IGNORED THEIR WARNINGS! HE'D LEFT THEM WITH THEIR SUSPICIONS AND SUPERSTITIOUS BLABBER, AND HE'D MOVED DOWN THE STREET TO THIS BLACK-DRAPED BEAUTY...

EVENIN', ANNA. MIND IF I WALK WITH YOU?

WHY IT'S YOU, MR. BUCKLY. DIDN'T THEY...DIDN'T THEY TELL YOU TO STAY AWAY FROM ME?



THEY TOLD ME LOTS OF THINGS, ANNA. THINGS I WON'T BELIEVE. THINGS I KNOW AREN'T TRUE.

MR. BUCKLY, I... I... CERTAINLY, MR. BUCKLY. I'D BE PROUD TO HAVE YOU WALK WITH ME!



SO, DESPITE THE TOWNSFOLK'S WARNINGS, WALDO'D STARTED SEEING ANNA... AND THERE'D BEEN MANY EVENINGS TOGETHER... AND MANY WALKS...

ANNA... I... I LOVE YOU!

OH, WALDO! WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ME? DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MY SON?



I KNOW ABOUT HIM! I KNOW THAT HE'S SICK AND WEAK AND NEEDS A FATHER. AND I WANT TO BE HIS FATHER. I WANT YOU FOR MY WIFE...

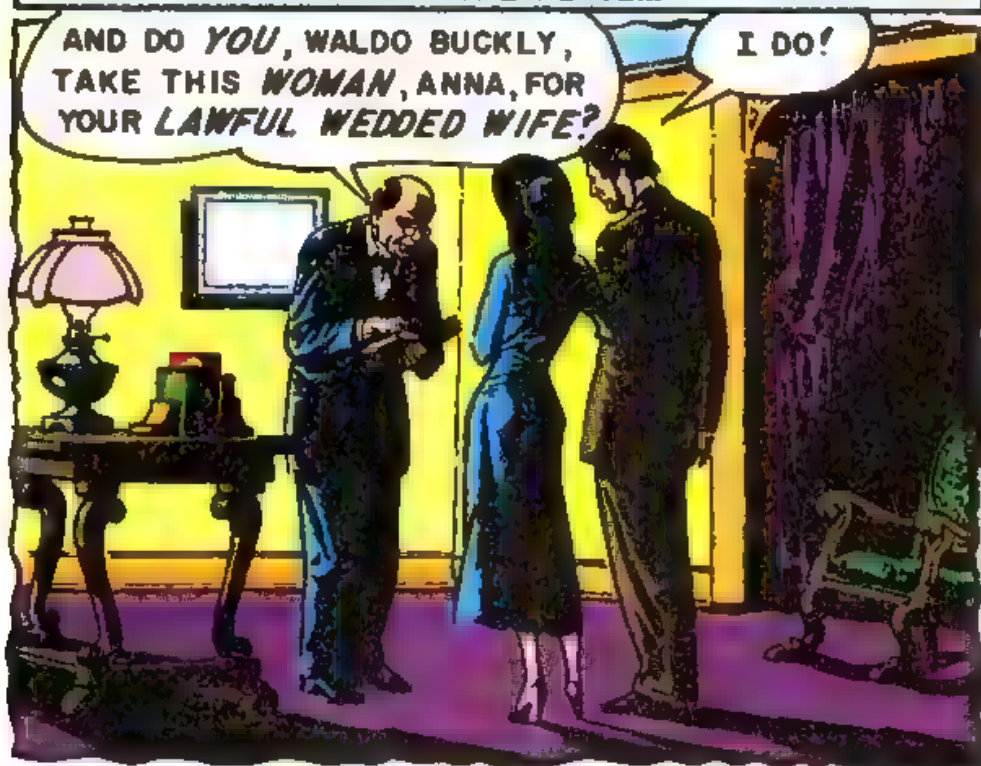
OH, WALDO... DEAREST!



WALDO LAY STIFFLY...STARING UP AT THE DARK CABIN CEILING...THINKING ABOUT TONIGHT...ABOUT THE HAPPY TRIP TO THE JUSTICE OF THE PEACE...

AND DO *YOU*, WALDO BUCKLY, TAKE THIS *WOMAN*, ANNA, FOR YOUR *LAWFUL WEDDED WIFE*?

I DO!



... AND THEN WALDO THOUGHT ABOUT THE HOMECOMING. HOW ANNA'D FUSSED...PUTTING THE BOY TO BED EARLY... AND MAKING THE *WEDDING SUPPER*...

WHAT YUH *COOKIN'*, ANNA?

STEAK... WALDO...



AND NOW, HE WAS LYING IN THE DARKNESS BESIDE THIS WOMAN...LISTENING TO HER IRREGULAR BREATHING... KNOWING SHE WAS NOT ASLEEP...AND WAITING...

THEY'RE *WRONG!* THEY *MUST* BE WRONG. THEY *HAVE* TO BE WRONG! I'M *SURE*...

WALDO?



WALDO FROZE. HE TRIED TO REGULATE HIS BREATHING. ANNA WHISPERED INTO THE DARKNESS...

ARE YOU *ASLEEP*, WALDO?



COULD IT BE *HE* WAS WRONG? COULD IT BE THE *TOWNS-FOLK* WERE *RIGHT*? ANNA WAS *GETTING UP*...MOVING ACROSS THE CABIN BEDROOM FLOOR...TOWARDS THE *SLEEPING PALE-FACED BOY*...

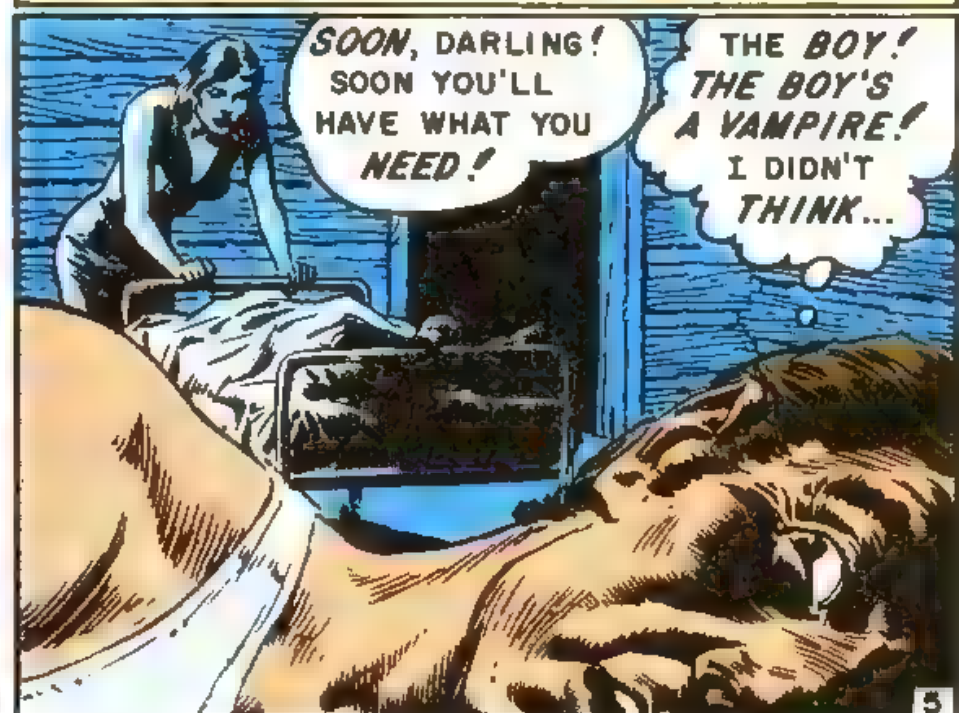
NOW SHE WAS PUSHING THE COT...NOISELESSLY ... SLOWLY...ON WELL-OILED CASTERS...TOWARD THE BED WHERE WALDO LAY, WIDE-AWAKE... FROZEN... WAITING...

ARE YOU *ASLEEP*, MY BABY?



SOON, DARLING! SOON YOU'LL HAVE WHAT YOU *NEED!*

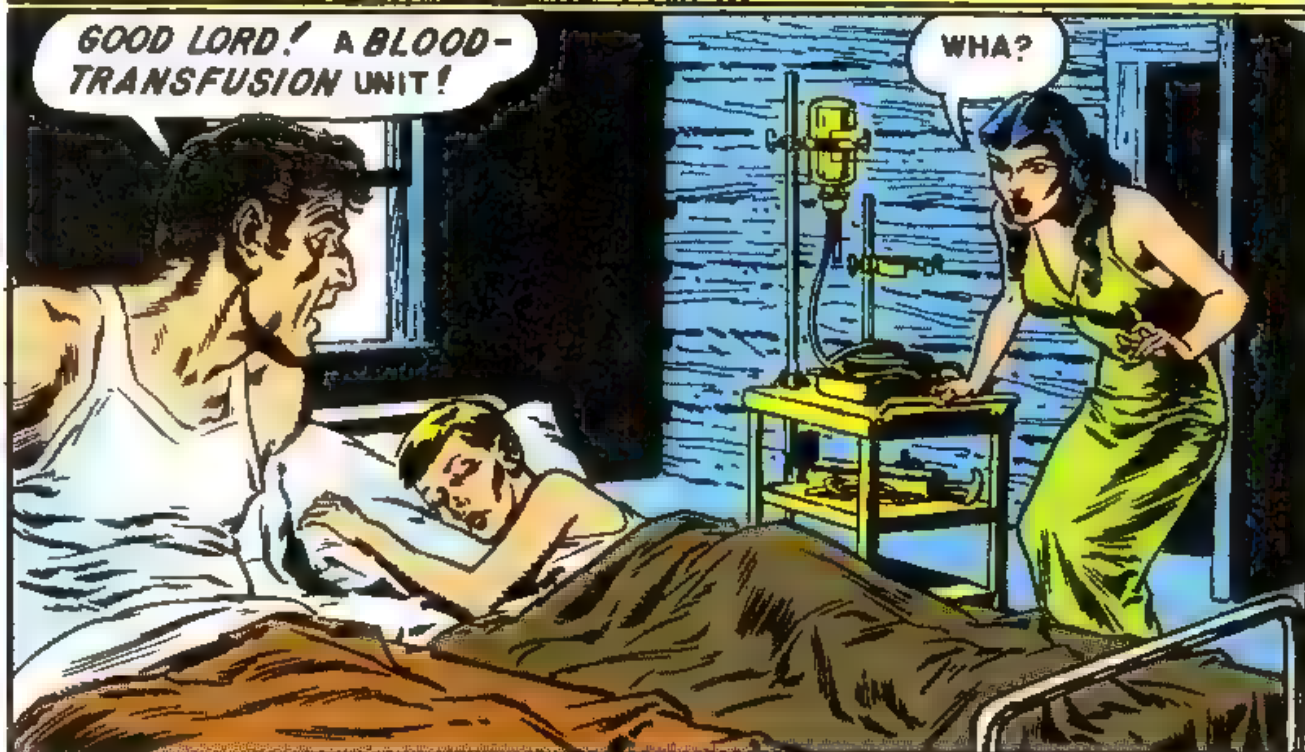
THE *BOY!* THE *BOY'S* A *VAMPIRE!* I DIDN'T *THINK*...



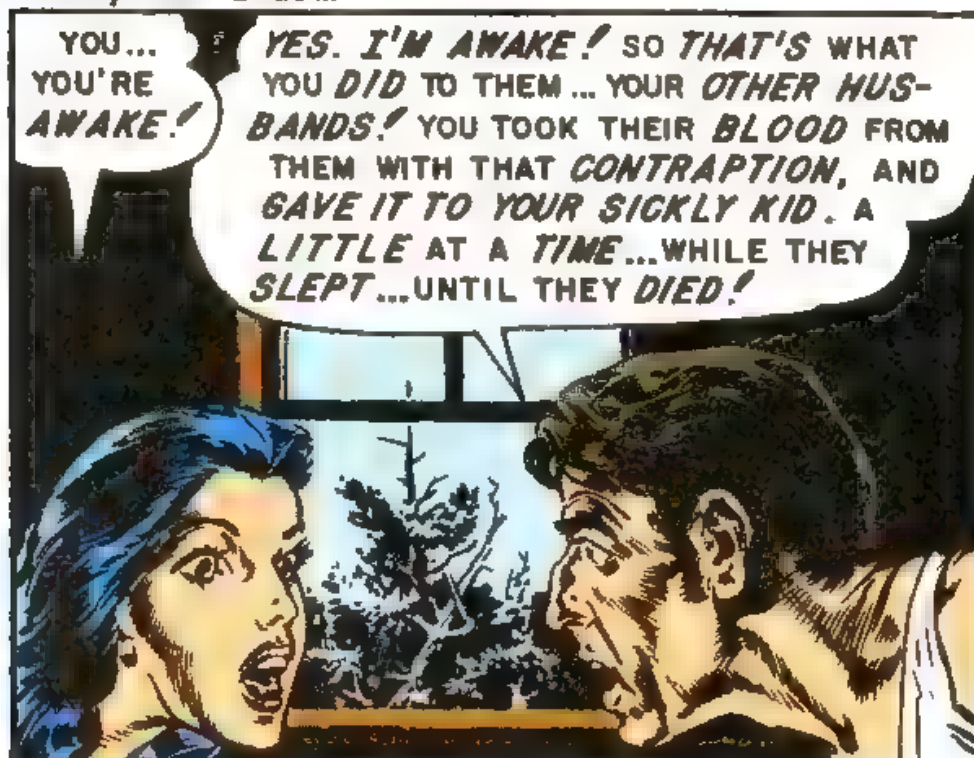
NOW ANNA WAS MOVING TO THE CABIN CLOSET. WALDO WAITED. THERE WAS STILL TIME. HE'D MAKE SURE...



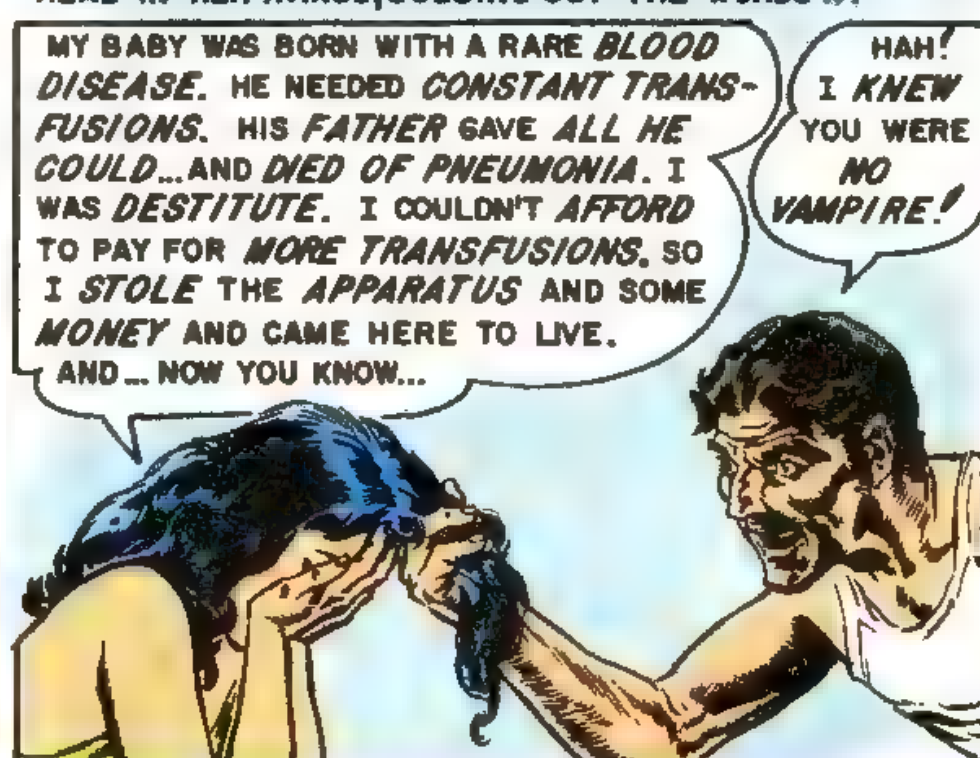
AND NOW ANNA WAS WHEELING IT OUT OF THE CLOSET. THE *CONTRAPTION*. THE WEIRD LOOKING CONTRAPTION WITH THE COILS OF RUBBER HOSE AND THE TWO LETHAL-LOOKING HOLLOW NEEDLES AND THE CLAMPS AND BRACKETS AND THE SIMPLE HAND-PUMP...



WALDO LEAPED OUT OF BED, LAUGHING. ANNA BACKED AWAY, WIDE-EYED...



ANNA BEGAN TO CRY. SHE SAT DOWN ON THE BED, HER HEAD IN HER HANDS, SOBBING OUT THE WORDS...



SHE LOOKED UP AT WALDO WITH TEAR-FILLED EYES...



WALDO GRINNED, REVEALING HIS NEEDLE-LIKE FANGS...



AND SO, WE LEAVE ANNA SCREAMING AS WALDO SUCKS HER BLOOD, AND END OUR LITTLE TALE, CREEPS. AND REST ASSURED... ANNA'S LITTLE BOY IS SURE TO BE WALDO'S DESSERT... WHAT LITTLE THERE IS, OF COURSE. AND NOW, FOR YOUR LAST HORROR HELPING, HERE'S THE *CRYPT-KEEPER*. I'LL BE IN MY REEKING-RESTAURANT, THE HAUNT OF FEAR, AGAIN... MY CAULDRON BUBBLING WITH SOME BLOODY BREW...



WAITING TO SERVE THE SLOP TO YOU... IN *G.K.'S MAG, TALES FROM THE CRYPT*. SEE YOU THEN. 'BYE, NOW! BUY *E.C.* GO CRA-ZY!

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

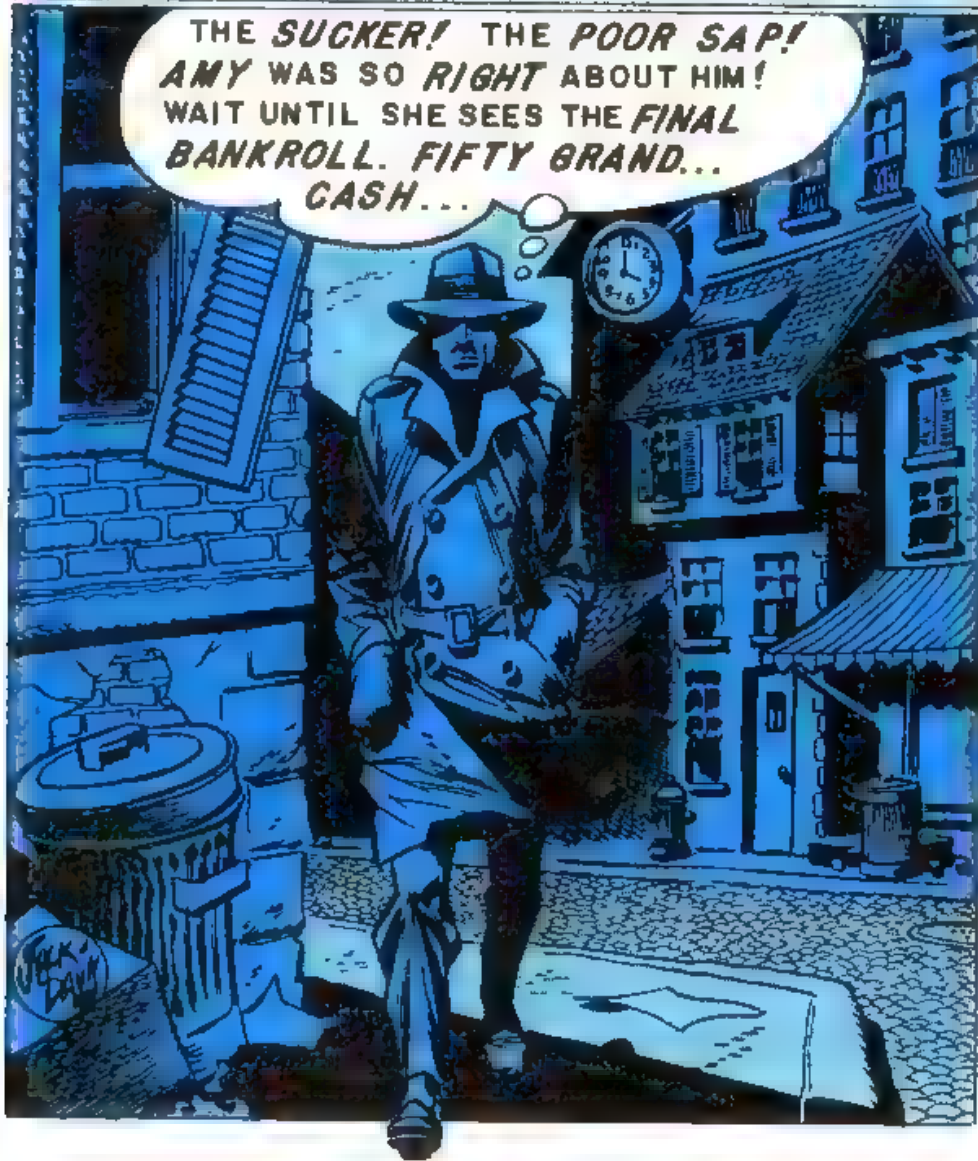
HEH HEH! AND NOW IT'S YOUR *CRYPT-KEEPER'S* TURN TO *CURDLE* YOUR *BLOOD!* SO CREEP INTO *THE CRYPT OF TERROR*, FIENDS, PLOP DOWN ON THAT *MORRIS CHAIR* THERE... BEING CAREFUL NOT TO DISTURB *POOR DEAD MORRIS*, AND I'LL TELL YOU A *TREMBLE-TALE*. I SEE THAT *O.W.* HAS WOVEN A STORY AROUND POE'S '*THE TALE-TALE HEART*.' WELL, HERE'S *MY OFFERING...* MY *OFFENSIVE OPUS...* A YARN BASED ON STEVENSON'S CLASSIC, '*DOCTOR JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE*.' I CALL THIS SPINE-TINGLER...

HYDE AND GO SHRIEK!

FAR ACROSS THE CITY, A BANK CLOCK TOLLS THE HOUR... SADLY, MOURNFULLY. IT IS FOUR A.M.. IT IS THE HOUR WHEN THE CITY STREETS, LIT ONLY BY DIM, FAR-SPACED LAMPS, LIE BARREN AND DESERTED... WHEN THE HOUSES CROUCH SILENTLY, DARKENED AND LOCKED SHUT... WHEN THE LIFE OF THE METROPOLIS SLEEPS, SUSPENDED, WAITING FOR JANGLING ALARM CLOCKS AND THE FIRST RAYS OF DAWN TO AWAKEN IT ONCE MORE. IT IS THE HOUR WHEN THINGS OF EVIL FIND COMFORT... WHEN THEY CRAWL FORTH, UNAFRAID, FROM THEIR HIDING PLACES. ON ONE LONELY STREET IN THE SLEEPING CITY, A FIGURE MOVES... QUICKLY, ANXIOUSLY. A FIGURE OF A MAN. MYRON NORWOOD.

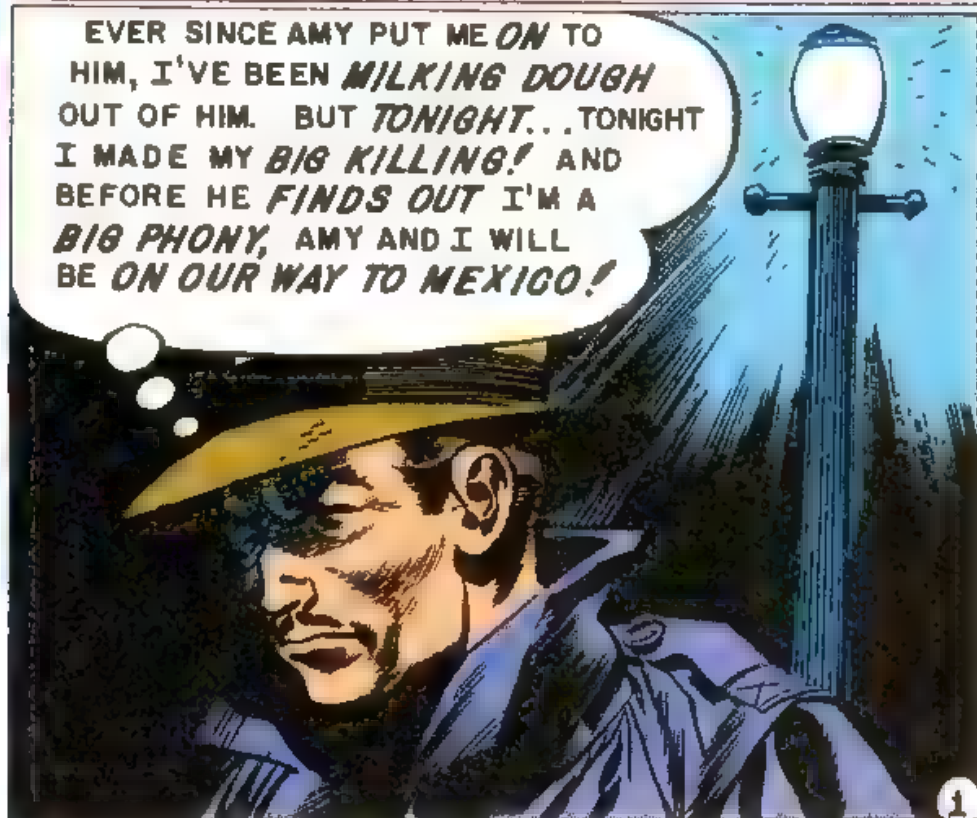


THE *SUCKER!* THE *POOR SAP!* *AMY* WAS SO *RIGHT* ABOUT HIM! WAIT UNTIL SHE SEES THE *FINAL BANKROLL*. *FIFTY GRAND... CASH...*



THE DESERTED STREET ECHOES THE STACCATO SOUND OF MYRON'S HURRYING FOOTSTEPS. HE PASSES BENEATH A STREET LIGHT, SQUINTING IN ITS GLARE...

EVER SINCE *AMY* PUT ME *ON* TO HIM, I'VE BEEN *MILKING DOUGH* OUT OF HIM. BUT *TONIGHT...* TONIGHT I MADE MY *BIG KILLING!* AND BEFORE HE *FINDS OUT* I'M A *BIG PHONY*, *AMY* AND I WILL BE *ON OUR WAY TO MEXICO!*



MYRON CHUCKLES AS HE TURNS A CORNER...

I REMEMBER THE DAY AMY TOLD ME ABOUT HIM. 'MYRON', SHE SAID TO ME, 'MYRON, IT'LL BE LIKE TAKING *CANDY* FROM A *BABY*! HE'S *LOADED*, I TELL YOU...'

...*LOADED*! HIS NAME IS *YERGO*! HE CAME HERE ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO FROM EUROPE. HE WENT TO NIGHT SCHOOL TO LEARN ENGLISH. HE'S GOT SOME KIND OF TIE-UP IN EUROPE AND HE'S MAKING *PILES OF DOUGH*.

WHEN DID YOU GET THE JOB, AMY?

A MONTH AGO. HE ADVERTISED FOR A *SECRETARY* AND I ANSWERED HIS AD. HE TOOK A *LIKING* TO ME, SO...

ANYBODY'D TAKE A *LIKING* TO YOU, BABY...



CUT IT OUT, HONEY! NOT *NOW*! LISTEN, WILL YOU? ANYWAY, HE'S LIKE A *KID*. AFTER HE LEARNED HOW TO READ *ENGLISH*, HE STARTED READING *EVERYTHING* HE COULD GET HIS *HANDS* ON. AND LAST WEEK, HE READ THIS '*DOCTOR JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE*' BOOK...

AND YERGO GOT ALL *EXCITED* ABOUT IT, EH? HE *BELIEVES IT*?!

HE *WANTS* TO BELIEVE IT, HONEY! HE *IDENTIFIES* THIS *MR. HYDE* CHARACTER WITH ALL OF HIS OWN *FRUSTRATIONS*... HIS OWN *SECRET LONGINGS*. WAIT TILL YOU *MEET* HIM! HE'S *SHY* AND *TIMID*. BUT *DOWN DEEP INSIDE*, HE'S GOT AN *EVIL, SADISTIC, LUSTFUL STREAK* IN HIM. I *KNOW* IT. I'VE SEEN THE WAY HE *LOOKS AT ME* AT TIMES.



HE TOLD ME HE *READS* THAT BOOK *EVERY NIGHT*. HE CONFESSED TO ME THAT IF ONLY HE COULD FIND A WAY, LIKE *DOCTOR JEKYLL*, TO *UNCORK* HIS *BOTTLED-UP DESIRES*, IF ONLY HE COULD FIND THE *NERVE* TO DO THE *DEPRAVED THINGS* HE *YEARNS* TO DO, IF ONLY HE COULD BE *UNINHIBITED* LIKE *MR. HYDE*, HE'D BE *EGSTATIC*! PERSONALLY, I THINK HE'S GOT A *SCREW LOOSE* SOMEWHERE!

BUT WHERE DO I FIT IN, AMY... A *SECOND-RATE CONSULTANT CHEMIST*?

IF YERGO THOUGHT YOU COULD *REDISCOVER DR. JEKELL'S SECRET FORMULA*... IF HE THOUGHT YOU COULD *MAKE* HIM INTO A *MR. HYDE*, HE'D *PAY ALMOST ANYTHING*! AND YOU COULD *PHONY THE WHOLE THING*... CARRY ON *FAKE RESEARCH*... *CHARGE* FOR *PHONY EQUIPMENT*... TAKE HIM FOR *PLENTY*. WE COULD *CASH IN*!

OKAY! *TOMORROW*, STEER THE *CONVERSATION* AROUND TO IT AND *DROP MY NAME*. TIP ME OFF SO I'LL BE *READY* FOR HIM.



THE LIGHT FROM THE STREET LAMP CASTS AN EERIE GLOW ON MYRON'S GRIM FACE AS HE PASSES BENEATH IT... HURRYING...

AMY WAS *CLEVER*. THE *VERY NEXT DAY*, YERGO PHONED ME... AND THAT EVENING, THE CHARACTER WAS IN *MY LABORATORY*...



IN *OTHER* WORDS, MR. YERGO, YOU WANT ME TO DUPLICATE DR. JEKYLL'S EXPERIMENTS AND DEVELOP A FORMULA TO TURN YOU INTO A '*MR. HYDE*'!



YA, MEESTER NORWOOD. DAT IZ VOT I VANT. I VANT TO BE ABLE TO *ENJOY* DOING THINGS THAT I AM *AFRAID* TO DO *NOW* BECAUSE I VOOD FEEL *GUILTY*.

'YERGO OPENED HIS DOG-EARED COPY OF "DOCTOR JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE..."'

I VANT TO BE ABLE TO DO *VIOLENT* AND *EXCITING* THINGS LIKE MR. *HYDE*... LIKE *THIS!* LISTEN...

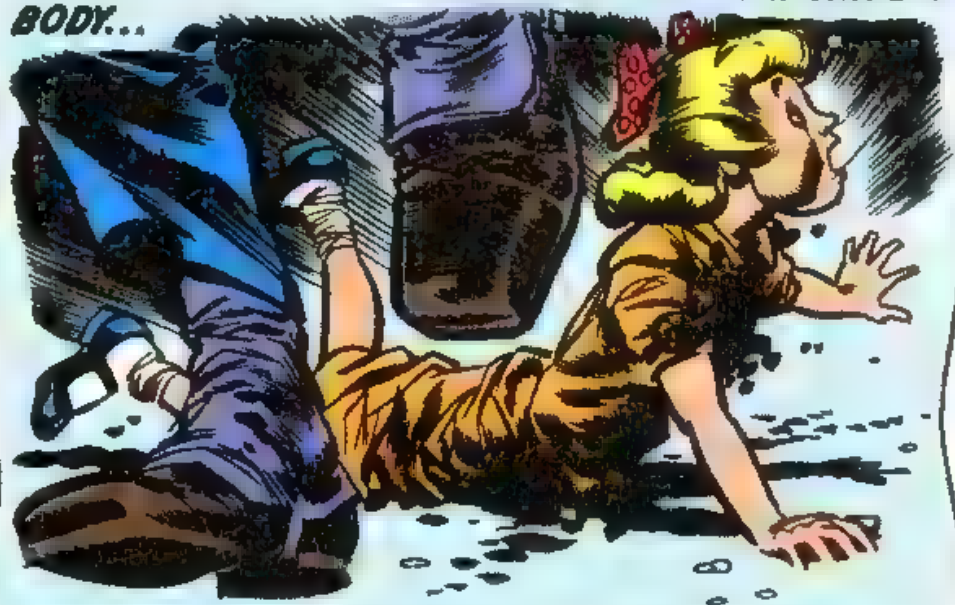


"MR. HYDE HAD IN HIS HAND A *HEAVY CANE*. THE OLD GENTLEMAN TOOK A STEP BACK, AND AT THAT MR. HYDE BROKE OUT OF ALL BOUNDS AND *CLUBBED HIM TO THE EARTH*..."



... AND THE NEXT MOMENT, WITH *APE-LIKE FURY*, HE WAS *TRAMPLING* HIS VICTIM *UNDER FOOT* AND *HAILING* DOWN A *STORM OF BLOWS*, UNDER WHICH THE *BONES* WERE *AUDIBLY SHATTERED*..."

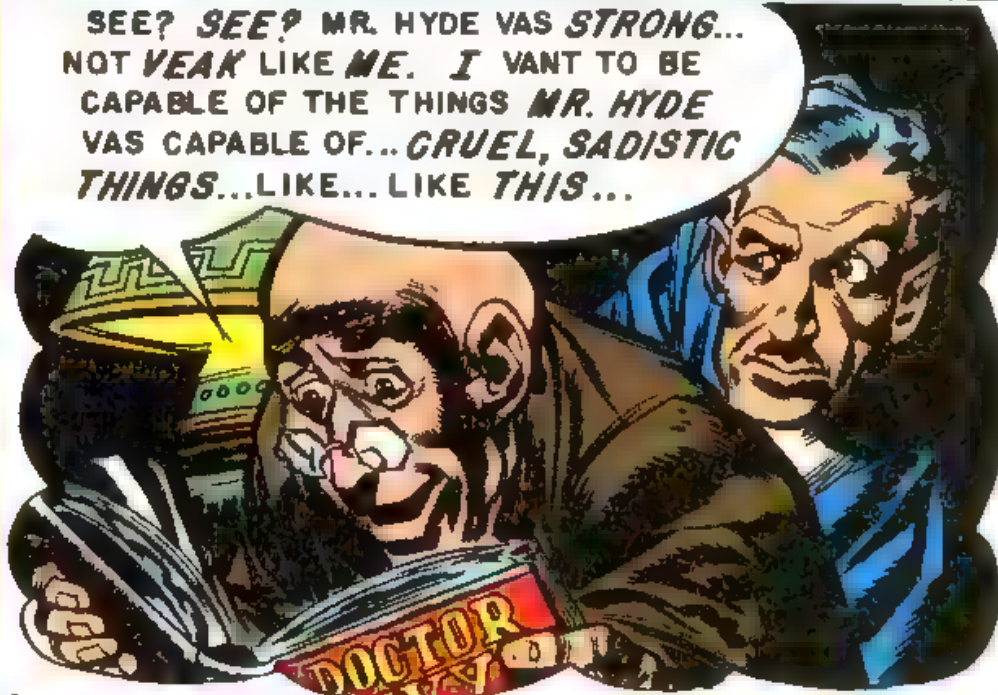
"THE MAN (MR. HYDE) WAS STUMPING ALONG, AND THE GIRL OF EIGHT OR TEN WAS RUNNING AS HARD AS SHE WAS ABLE. THEN CAME THE HORRIBLE PART OF THE THING; FOR THE MAN *TRAMPLED OVER THE CHILD'S BODY*..."



...AND LEFT HER *SCREAMING ON THE GROUND!*"

'YERGO'S VOICE WAS HIGH-PITCHED AS HE READ. HE PAUSED, GASPING, LOOKING AT ME WILDLY. THEN HE GRINNED GLEEFULLY AS HE FURIOUSLY FLIPPED PAGES...'

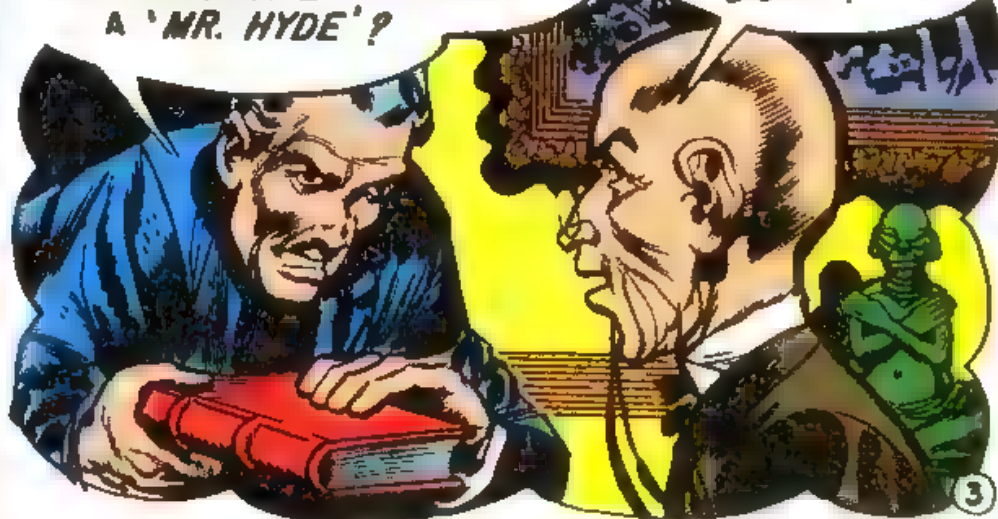
SEE? SEE? MR. HYDE VAS *STRONG*... NOT *VEAK* LIKE ME. I VANT TO BE CAPABLE OF THE THINGS MR. HYDE VAS CAPABLE OF... *GRUEL, SADISTIC THINGS*... LIKE... LIKE *THIS*...



'YERGO SHUT THE BOOK REVERENTLY, HIS CHEST HEAVING. HE WAS EMOTIONALLY SHATTERED BY THE PASSAGES HE'D JUST READ. THE GUY *WAS* OFF HIS ROCKER, ALL RIGHT. IT WAS GOING TO BE SUCH *EASY PICKINGS*...'

AND THAT IS WHAT YOU WANT?! YOU WANT TO BE ABLE TO *DEGENERATE* INTO A... A '*MR. HYDE*'?

YA. ZAT IZ VOT I VANT! CAN YOU *DO IT*?



MYRON STEPS OFF THE CURB AND CROSSES THE SILENT STREET. HE SHUDDERS...

THE GUY WAS *DULL... REAL NAIVE!* BUT IT WAS A CHANCE TO PICK UP SOME EASY DOUGH. I WAS *HAPPY TO PLAY ALONG... PLAY ALONG TO THE HILT...*

IT IS PROBABLE, MR. YERGO, I AM THAT AFTER CAREFUL PERUSAL OF THE STORY I WOULD BE ABLE TO FIND CLUES AS TO THE POSSIBLE CHEMICAL MAKE-UP OF THE FORMULA. BUT IT WILL TAKE *RESEARCH TO DEVELOP IT...*

I AM *VILLING TO PAY, MEESTER NORWOOD!*

RESEARCH COSTS A *GREAT DEAL*, MR. YERGO. THERE'RE EQUIPMENT COSTS... GUINEA PIGS... CHEMICALS... INSTRUMENTS. AND THERE'S *MY TIME...*

VILL A CHECK FOR \$1000 COVER IT?



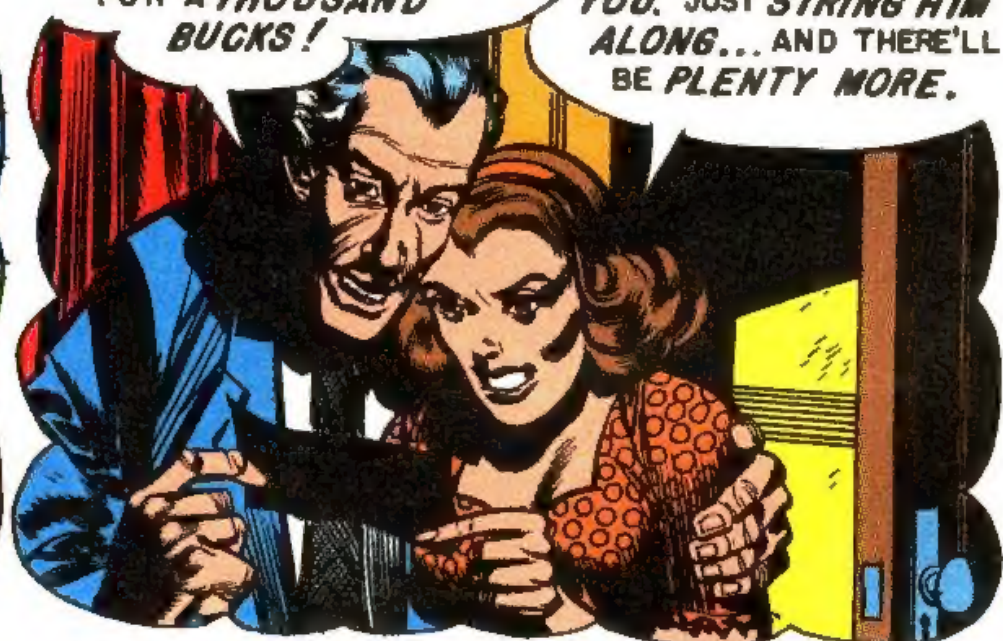
IT'LL DO FOR A *STARTER*, MR. YERGO, AND I CAN'T GUARANTEE RESULTS *RIGHT OFF THE BAT*, BUT...

TAKE YOUR TIME, MEESTER NORWOOD. IF YOU NEED MORE *MONEY*, PLEASE LET ME *KNOW*. AND NOW, I MUST LEAVE...

'AFTER YERGO BLEW, AMY CAME OUT OF HER HIDING PLACE AND I TOOK HER IN MY ARMS. WE BOTH LAUGHED OUT LOUD...'

LOOK, BABY. A *CHECK...* FOR A *THOUSAND BUCKS!*

OH, *HONEY*. I TOLD YOU. JUST *STRING HIM ALONG...* AND THERE'LL BE *PLENTY MORE*.



'WHAT A TIME AMY AND I HAD SPENDING THAT DOUGH! WE BOUGHT NEW CLOTHES, HIT THE BEST NIGHT CLUBS, AND TOASTED OUR NEW-FOUND BANKROLL...'

TO MR. YERGO... THE *SUCKER*. MAY HIS *CHECKS KEEP COMING...*

... AND *GROWING*.

'AND JUST TO MAKE IT LOOK GOOD, I BOUGHT A DOZEN GUINEA PIGS, AND SET UP INTRICATE AND IMPRESSIVE APPARATUS ALL AROUND THE LAB...'

I WAS *FREE* TONIGHT, MEESTER NORWOOD, SO I DROPPED BY TO SEE IF YOU WAS MAKING ANY *PROGRESS...*

WELL, A *LITTLE*, MR. YERGO. I THINK I'VE *FOUND* SOMETHING! YOU REMEMBER, IN THE BOOK, WHEN JEKYL TALKS ABOUT THE PHOSPHORUS SALT...



MYRON GRINS EVILY, THE STREET-LIGHT REFLECTING ON HIS YELLOW TEETH...

WHAT A *PHONY LINE OF HOGWASH* I HANDED HIM. I QUOTED A FEW LINES FROM THE *STORY*, AND THEN GAVE HIM SOME *CHEMICAL-DOUBLE-TALK* TO EXPLAIN IT...



...AND I THINK THAT IF I WORK ALONG *THOSE LINES*, I MAY FIND WHAT WE'RE *LOOKING FOR*!



GOOD. *GOOD. VEL, THANK YOU, AND...*



OH, *ONE THING*, MR. YERGO. I'LL NEED SOME *MORE MONEY*. THIS *EQUIPMENT* USED UP ALL THAT YOU GAVE ME!

OH? I SEE! VEL...OF COURSE. SHALL WE MAKE IT \$5000, THIS TIME?



'WHAT IS THERE ABOUT *FURS* THAT TURNS A *NORMAL WOMAN* INTO A *PASSIONATE FLAMING ANIMAL*? I REMEMBER THE NIGHT I BOUGHT AMY THAT MINK COAT WITH THE DOUGH FROM YERGO'S SECOND CHECK...'

OH, MYRON... *IT'S BEAUTIFUL... BEAUTIFUL. YOU'RE SO GOOD TO ME...*

BABY...



'AND WHAT A *SHOW* I'D PUT ON FOR *CLUNK-HEAD* WHENEVER HE CAME TO THE LAB. DRY ICE IN BEAKERS OF WATER BUBBLING MYSTERIOUSLY AND GIVING OFF CLOUDS OF EERIE-LOOKING VAPOR... RETORTS BOILING... TITRATIONS ACCOMPLISHING NOTHING... AMMONIA FOUNTAINS... COLOR CHANGE REACTIONS WITH INDICATORS! YERGO WOULD LOOK AROUND *WIDE-EYED*...'

ANYTHING *NEW*, MEESTER NORWOOD?

WE'RE ON THE *RIGHT TRACK*, MR. YERGO. I'M *SURE* OF IT. BUT... I'LL NEED SOME *MORE MONEY*...



'ANOTHER \$5000 CHECK. *MORE WILD TIMES* FOR AMY AND ME...'

DO YOU THINK HE'LL *CATCH ON*, MYRON? I MEAN... WELL, I *LIKE* THE WAY THINGS ARE LATELY. I'D LIKE THEM TO *CONTINUE*!

HE'S *TOO THICK* TO CATCH ON, BABY! HE SWALLOWS *EVERY PHONY THING* I TELL HIM. DON'T WORRY. I'LL STRING HIM ALONG.



'I THOUGHT UP THE *CRAZIEST COMBINATIONS* OF *HARMLESS CHEMICALS* TO INJECT INTO THOSE POOR GUINEA PIGS WHEN YERGO CAME AROUND. HE'D WATCH, COMPLETELY TAKEN IN BY THE WHOLE FRAUD...'

DO YOU THINK *THIS FORMULA* WILL *VORK*, MEESTER NORWOOD?

WE'LL *SEE* IN A *MOMENT*, MR. YERGO. *THERE*...



THE CORNER IS JUST AHEAD. THE CORNER WHERE MYRON IS TO MEET AMY. HE BREATHES HARDER NOW, GIGGLING...

OF COURSE, NOTHING EVER HAPPENED TO THE GUINEA PIGS. SOME OF THEM GOT CASES OF *HIVES* OR *ASTHMA*! BUT THAT WAS ALL! AND I LED YERGO ON... FOOLED HIM ALL THE WAY...



'AND THEN, ONE DAY, AFTER MIXING UP ONE OF MY WEIRD COMBINATIONS AND INJECTING IT INTO A GUINEA PIG...'

WHY... WHY...
GOOD LORD!
IT'S...

LOOK, MEESTER NORWOOD. IT IS CHANGING!



'FRANKLY, I WAS *PUZZLED* AT THE GUINEA PIG'S REACTION! IT SEEMED TO GROW VERY *FIERCE*...IT *SQUEELED* AND *DARTED WILDLY* ABOUT THE CAGE! BUT...

THAT'S IT, MISTER YERGO. WE'VE GOT IT!

GIVE IT TO ME. GIVE IT TO ME.



WAIT! YOU CAN'T TAKE IT YET! I HAVEN'T DEVELOPED AN *ANTIDOTE*! YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE IT *WITHOUT* THE *ANTIDOTE*, DO YOU?

NO! NO! OF COURSE NOT. BUT HOW LONG...



NOT VERY LONG, MR. YERGO. BUT I'LL WANT *MORE MONEY*! A LOT MORE! *FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS*... AS MY *FEE*! SO FAR, I HAVEN'T MADE A *PENNY*...

FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS? NO! THIS IS A *HOLDUP*! A *ROBBERY*!



HE PAID. I DEMANDED IT IN CASH AND HE TROTTED OFF TO GET IT. I QUICKLY ANALYZED WHAT I'D GIVEN THE GUINEA PIG...

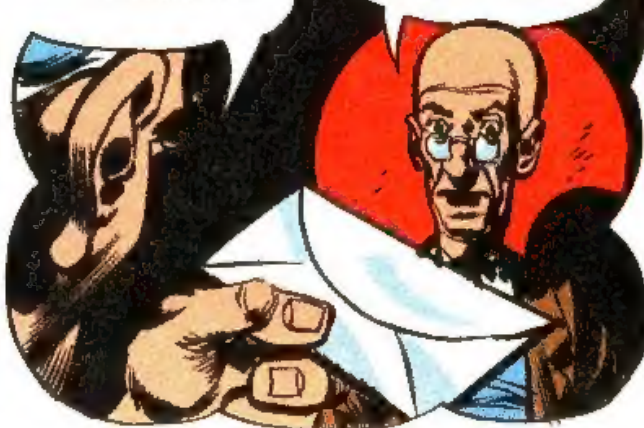
WELL, THIS CONGLOMERATION IS SLIGHTLY *ACID* IN CHARACTER! THAT POOR *GUINEA PIG* DEVELOPED NOTHING MORE THAN AN *ACID STOMACH*... PROBABLY *PAINFUL*! THE '*ANTIDOTE*' IS *SIMPLE*. SODIUM BICARBONATE... *BAKING SODA*!



WHEN MR. YERGO RETURNED, I HAD A FLASK OF THE RIDICULOUS FORMULA READY. I'D SEALED A PAPER WITH THE WORDS '*BICARBONATE OF SODA*' INTO AN ENVELOPE...

HERE IS YOUR *FORMULA*, AND IN THIS *ENVELOPE* I'VE WRITTEN THE *ANTIDOTE*! NOW...THE *MONEY*...

JUST VUN MOMENT, MEESTER NORWOOD. HOW DO I KNOW THIS FORMULA *REALLY* WORKS?



I POURED A FEW DROPS OF THE PHONY FORMULA INTO A BEAKER. AFTER ALL, WHAT DID I HAVE TO *LOSE*? A *SLIGHT ACID STOMACH* IN EXCHANGE FOR *FIFTY GRAND*...

HERE...WATCH!



'I GAVE YERGO THE BEST ACT I COULD MANAGE. I *SHUDDERED!* I *GRITTED MY TEETH!* I *MOANED!* I *SNARLED!* I *RAVED!* I *SCREAMED...*'

YAAAGGHH... IT...IT DOES VORK!



'HE WATCHED, GRINNING IDIOTICALLY. WHEN HE LOOKED CONVINCED, I CALMED DOWN. I GASPED...

THERE! YOU SEE? AND I ONLY TOOK A DROP OR SO! A GREATER AMOUNT, OF COURSE, WOULD LAST INDEFINITELY... AND REQUIRE THE ANTIDOTE!

THANK YOU, MEESTER NORVOOD! THANK YOU...



MYRON STOPS AT THE CORNER BEFORE THE DARKENED STORE WINDOW. IN THE DISTANCE, HIGH HEELS CLICK OVER THE EMPTY STREETS...

HEH, HEH! WHY RIGHT NOW, THE JERK IS PROBABLY ROLLING ON THE FLOOR OF HIS APARTMENT WITH THE WORST DARN BELLY ACHE HE'S EVER...HAD...
OH, MY GOD!



MYRON STARES AT HIS REFLECTION IN THE STORE WINDOW...

GOOD LORD! THAT CONCOCTION...



THE CLICKING HEELS SOUND CLOSER NOW...

AMY IS COMING. MYRON LOOKS ABOUT WILDLY...

I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING BEFORE SHE GETS HERE! I HAVE TO...TO...THE ANTIDOTE! BIGARBONATE OF SODA. IT COULD REALLY WORK! THE STUFF WAS ACIDIC! THERE! IN THE WINDOW...

MYRON? IS THAT YOU?



THE SHATTERING OF GLASS ECHOES DOWN THE DESERTED STREET. MYRON REACHES IN, SNATCHING A BOX OF BIGARBONATE FROM THE DRUG STORE WINDOW. IT COLLAPSES IN HIS HAND...

PHONY! THE BOX IS A PHONY! A FRAUD! JUST LIKE ME...AND...AND HER! SHE GOT ME INTO THIS!

MYRON?



MYRON TURNS. NOW HE IS EVERYTHING THAT HYDE WAS...ALL OF THE EVIL AND FILTH AND VIOLENCE...

EEEEEEEE...GH!



HEH, HEH. POOR AMY! SHE ENDED UP SPLATTERED ALL OVER THE SIDEWALK BECAUSE MYRON'S AND HER PHONY SCHEME TURNED OUT TO BE FOR REAL! AND THE BIGARB IN THE WINDOW DISPLAY TURNED OUT TO BE FOR PHONY! I'M SURE THERE'S A MORAL HERE SOMEWHERE, BUT I'M TOO LAZY TO FIGURE IT OUT! NO MATTER! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, TALES FROM THE CRYPT! TILL THEN KIDDIES, STAY IN THE SUN AND TAN YOUR HYDE!

